



## Cabinet

**Date:** Tuesday, 17 May 2022  
**Time:** 10.00 am  
**Venue:** Council Chamber, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

**Membership: (Quorum 3)**

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

**Cabinet Lead Members (6)** (are not members of the Cabinet but are appointed to work alongside Portfolio Holders)

Cherry Brooks, Simon Gibson, Andrew Kerby, Nocturin Lacey-Clarke, Byron Quayle and Jane Somper

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

For more information about this agenda please contact Democratic Services Meeting Contact 01305 252234 - [kate.critchel@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:kate.critchel@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

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

For easy access to all the council's committee agendas and minutes download the free public app called Modern.Gov for use on your iPad, Android, and Window tablet. Once downloaded select Dorset Council.

## Agenda

**Page No**

**1. APOLOGIES**

To receive any apologies for absence.

**2. MINUTES**

5 - 26

To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on 5 April 2022.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To disclose any pecuniary, other registrable or non-registrable interest as set out in the adopted Code of Conduct. In making their disclosure councillors are asked to state the agenda item, the nature of the

interest and any action they propose to take as part of their declaration.

If required, further advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

#### **4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

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 up to two questions or two statements for each meeting. Alternatively, you could submit one question and one statement for each meeting.

All submissions must be emailed in full to [kate.critchell@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:kate.critchell@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk) by 8.30am on Thursday 12 May 2022.

When submitting your question(s) and/or statement(s) please note that:

- no more than three minutes will be allowed for any one question or statement to be asked/read
- a question may include a short pre-amble to set the context and this will be included within the three-minute period
- please note that sub divided questions count towards your total of two
- 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.

[Dorset Council Constitution](#) Procedure Rule 9

#### **5. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

To receive questions submitted by councillors.

Councillors can submit up to two valid questions at each meeting and sub divided questions count towards this total. Questions and statements received will be published as a supplement to the agenda and all questions, statements and responses will be published in full within the minutes of the meeting.

The submissions must be emailed in full to [kate.critchell@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:kate.critchell@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk) 8.30am on Thursday 12 May 2022.

[Dorset Council Constitution](#) – Procedure Rule 13

- |            |  |           |
|------------|--|-----------|
| <b>6.</b>  | <b>FORWARD PLAN</b>  | 27 - 36   |
|            | To consider the Cabinet Forward Plan.  |           |
| <b>7.</b>  | <b>REVISED INTER AUTHORITY AGREEMENT FOR JOINT ARCHIVES SERVICE</b>  | 37 - 64   |
|            | To consider a report of the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Communities and Customer Services.                           |           |
| <b>8.</b>  | <b>MINIMUM INCOME GUARANTEES IN CHARGES FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND SUPPORT</b>  | 65 - 78   |
|            | To consider a report of the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health.   |           |
| <b>9.</b>  | <b>RE-PROCUREMENT OF THE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR CHILDREN AND ADULT SERVICES</b>                        | 79 - 84   |
|            | To consider a report of the Portfolio Holders for Children, Education, Skills and Help & Adult Social Care and Health. |           |
| <b>10.</b> | <b>ASPIRE ADOPTION ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022 AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE 2022</b>   | 85 - 168  |
|            | To receive a report of the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills and Early Help.                            |           |
| <b>11.</b> | <b>RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES</b>   |           |
|            | To consider the following recommendation from the People and Health Overview Committee of 3 May 2022.                  |           |
| <b>12.</b> | <b>YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN</b>  | 169 - 212 |
|            | To Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills and Early Help to present the recommendation.                      |           |
| <b>13.</b> | <b>PORTFOLIO HOLDER - LEAD MEMBER(S) UPDATE SUMMARY</b>  |           |
|            | Cabinet Portfolio Holder(s) and Leader Members to report.  |           |
| <b>14.</b> | <b>CABINET MEMBER UPDATE ON POLICY DEVELOPMENT MATTER REFERRED TO AN OVERVIEW COMMITTEE(S) FOR CONSIDERATION</b>       |           |

Cabinet Portfolio Holders to report.

**Panels and Groups**

To receive any minutes, recommendations or verbal updates from panels, groups and boards:

**15. CLIMATE & ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY EXECUTIVE ADVISORY PANEL UPDATE**

To receive an update from the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment.

**16. URGENT ITEMS**

To consider any items of business which the Chairman has had prior notification and considers to be urgent pursuant to section 100B (4) b) of the Local Government Act 1972. The reason for the urgency shall be recorded in the minutes.

**17. EXEMPT BUSINESS**

To move the exclusion of the press and the public for the following item in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph x of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

The public and the press will be asked to leave the meeting whilst the item of business is considered.

**There was no exempt business scheduled for the meeting.**





## CABINET

### MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 5 APRIL 2022

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

**Apologies:** Cllrs Spencer Flower, Graham Carr-Jones and B Quayle

**Also present:** Cllr Andrew Kerby, Cllr Jane Somper, Cllr Tony Alford, Cllr Piers Brown, Cllr Beryl Ezzard, Cllr David Gray, Cllr Brian Heatley, Cllr Jon Orrell and Cllr Mary Penfold

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

Matt Prosser (Chief Executive), Aidan Dunn (Executive Director - Corporate Development S151), Jonathan Mair (Corporate Director - Legal & Democratic Service Monitoring Officer), John Sellgren (Executive Director, Place), Kate Critchel (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Theresa Leavy (Executive Director of People - Children), John Newcombe (Service Manager, Licensing & Community Safety) and Matthew Penny (Leader Manager - - Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM))

**74. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**75. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest to report.

**76. Public Participation**

There was one question from the public. This question along with the response from the Portfolio Holder is set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

**77. Questions from Councillors**

There were 2 questions from Councillor J Orrell; these along with the responses are set out in Appendix 2 to these minutes.

In response to a supplementary question regarding the need for organisations to be working more closely together for the most deprived areas of Weymouth, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that the aim was for a collaborative approach across the Police, Health and other partnerships; the local ward member would be kept informed of progress.

**78. Forward Plan**

The draft Cabinet Forward Plan for May 2022 was received and noted with the following item change:

Home to School and Post 16 Transport Policies report to be moved from May 2022 to July 2022.

**79. Council Plan Performance: January - March 2022**

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Development and Transformation set out a report on progress toward delivering Dorset Council's Plan for the period January – March 2022.

The Portfolio Holder highlighted the following areas:

- Economic Growth, Unique Environment, Climate and Ecology Work and the provision of Suitable Housing
- She also acknowledged that the number of homelessness approaches increased significantly at the start of the new year and was higher than anticipated.
- There had been significant improvements made in processing local land charge searches.
- Strong, Healthy Communities - the council secured over £2m from the Government's Household Support Fund.

In presenting the report the Portfolio Holder advised that the council's budget, which was agreed in February, continued to prioritise resource allocation to front-line services wherever possible.

In response to a question regarding performance measures for the climate and ecology work, the Portfolio Holder had recently asked cabinet members to review the performance measures of the plan to ensure that they were all pertinent and based on outcomes. Progress will be reported back to members in due course.

**Decision**

That the progress against the council plan priorities for the period January – March 2022 be noted.

**Reason to note and receive the report**

To ensure progress towards the Council Plan was measured and monitored.

**80. Lyme Regis Environmental Improvement Scheme Phase 5 Outline Business Case**

The Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment set out the report which aimed to strengthen and improve the Cobb structure at Lyme Regis.

The detailed report presented the online business case for the proposed scheme for which significant funding was being sought from the Flood Defence Grant-in-Aid, Section 106 monies, and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) sources.

In response to a question in respect of the project finance, the Service Manager for Flood and Coastal Erosion confirmed that the highest costs of scheme did relate to coastal protection, however there were non-coastal protection elements and these would be covered by the section 106 agreements and CIL.

It was proposed by Cllr R Bryan seconded by Cllr L Miller

### **Decision**

- (a) That the Lyme Regis Environmental Improvement Scheme Phase 5 Outline Business Case as set out at Appendix A, be agreed.
- (b) That Cabinet authorises the submission of the Outline Business Case to the Environment Agency's National Project Assurance Board.
- (c) That Cabinet authorises the use of allocated S106 derived funds as contributions toward the scheme construction costs.
- (d) That Cabinet authorises officers to progress the scheme to its completion, including construction, pending necessary expenditure approvals.

### **Reason for the decision**

As owner and coast protection authority, the Council was responsible for maintenance and repair of the Grade 1 Listed Cobb harbour structures to an appropriate standard. This project would provide coastal protection to 37 properties as well as maintain the recreational and heritage value of Lyme Bay, and continued operation of Lyme Regis Harbour.

## **81. Yetminster and Ryme Intrinseca Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2036**

The Portfolio Holder for Planning presented a report to formally make the Yetminster & Ryme Intrinseca Neighbourhood Plan for 2017-2036.

Cllr M Penfold, the local ward member spoke in support of the plan and it was unanimously supported by Cabinet.

It was proposed by Cllr D Walsh and seconded by Cllr T Ferrari

### **Decision**

- (a) That the Council makes the Yetminster & Ryme Intrinseca Neighbourhood Plan 2017 - 2036 (as set out in Appendix A) part of the statutory development plan for the Yetminster & Ryme Intrinseca Neighbourhood Area.

- (b) That the Council offers its congratulations to the Parish Council and members of the Neighbourhood Plan Group in producing a successful neighbourhood plan.

### **Reason for the decision**

To formally make the Yetminster & Ryme Intrinsic Neighbourhood Plan 2017 - 2036 part of the statutory development plan for the Yetminster & Ryme Intrinsic Neighbourhood Area.

## **82. Officer delegated authority to agree Telecoms Operators access agreements**

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Development and Transformation set out a report seeking delegated authority to enter into land access agreements in accordance with the Electronic Communications Code introduced by the Digital Economy Act 2017, so as to ease the delivery of the council's priorities for modern world-class digital connectivity.

Simplifying access to council land was an important part of Dorset Council's responsibility to support the market in providing the digital connectivity needed.

Cllr J Haynes proposed the recommendation set out in the report. Cllr Ferrari spoke in the support of the paper and seconded the motion

### **Decision**

That Cabinet:

- (a) Agrees a delegated decision route to grant access requests for telecoms infrastructure across, on or under council-owned land for a nominal value (eg £1), where the installation of the infrastructure is to directly benefit Dorset Council, or where the installation is delivered with public subsidy.
- (b) Delegates the decision to discount the relevant land charges to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Assets and Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Place, and the Corporate Director for Digital and Change.

### **Reason for decision**

To facilitate removing impediments and bottlenecks and in agreeing access to Dorset Council land and property for broadband delivery and recording a delegated decision.

## **83. Establishment of a Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence**

In the absence of the Leader of the Council, the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills and Early Help set out a proposal to establish an executive

committee of the Executive to carry out the Council's shareholder function for the Dorset Centre of Excellence.

The committee would meet quarterly and consist of 5 members. Cabinet were also asked to agree its terms of reference.

It was proposed by Cllr A Parry seconded by Cllr J Haynes

### **Decision**

- (a) That an executive committee of the Executive be established, to be known as 'The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence'.
- (b) That 5 members of the Executive be appointed to the Shareholder Committee.
- (c) That the Terms of Reference for the Shareholder Committee be approved.
- (d) That delegated authority be given to the Shareholder Committee within the scope of its terms of reference, including strategic oversight and Council Consent decisions.

### **Reason for the decision**

To establish formal governance arrangements for the performance of the Council's shareholder function for the Dorset Centre of Excellence.

## **84. Self- Evaluation of Children's Services**

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills and Early Help presented the Annual Self-Evaluation of Children's Services report.

The Executive Director for People (Children) took this opportunity to highlight that it had been a difficult and challenging year for the service and would continue to be so for the coming year. She emphasised the next steps for the service, as set out in the report, to enable the service to continue to improve provision for young people.

The Cabinet Lead for Safeguarding highlighted that one area for development was to improve the experience and outcomes for care leavers and reminded Cabinet that this was an all member responsibility as a corporate parent.

### **Decision**

That the Annual Self Evaluation of Children's Services be received and noted.

### **Reason to note and receive the report**

The requirement to produce an Annual Self Evaluation is part of the Ofsted Inspection Framework of Children's Services.

85. **Consultation Report for Anti-social Behaviour related Public Spaces Protection Orders**

The Portfolio Holder for Customer and Community Services set out the recommendation relating to Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO) for Dorset.

Members were advised that officers had reviewed the existing Orders, in consultation with statutory consultees and the revised draft Orders had been prepared.

The Portfolio Holder also confirmed that Place and Resources Overview Committee had considered the report and its recommendations at its meeting on 7 March 2022 and a number of proposed changes had been taken into account.

In response to a question relating to the use of electric scooters on Weymouth's Esplanade and that they raised safety concerns, the Service Manager for Licensing and Community Safety confirmed that this matter had also been raised by residents as part of this consultation. He advised that officers were looking at the cycling provisions on the Esplanade and was in discussions with colleagues in Highways to consider how this concern could be addressed.

In respect of a question regarding enforcement, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that a proper training programme was in place for enforcement. She further advised that a post-scrutiny review of PSPO's would be taking place in the future and any outstanding issues could be addressed as part of that review.

It was proposed by Cllr L Miller seconded by Cllr R Bryan

**Decision**

That the Anti-social Behaviour related Public Spaces Protection Orders for the following parts of the Dorset Council area, be approved:  
Bridport, Dorchester, Lyme Regis, Portland, West Bay, Weymouth, Dorset Beaches and Dorset Open Land.

**Reason for the decision**

To comply with legislative requirements for the making of Public Spaces Protection Orders.

To ensure openness and transparency in the Council's decision making by taking appropriate account of the results of the public consultation.

To ensure that those persons affected by anti-social behaviour were afforded the protection provided by such Orders.

86. **Dorset Education Board**

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills and Early Help presented a report and recommendation from the People and Health Overview Committee seeking approval of the creation of a new Education Board for Dorset.

The Portfolio Holder further advised that Mr Stephen Twigg had been appointed as Chair of the Board and he looked forward to working with him.

It was proposed by Cllr A Parry and seconded by Cllr J Haynes

### **Decision**

That the creation of a new Education Board for Dorset be approved.

### **Reason for the decision**

The establishment of an Education Board for Dorset will retain the strength of partnership working through the pandemic and mobilise our partnership to deliver the opportunities and tackle the challenges of the education system in Dorset.

## **87. Children's Commissioning Strategy**

The Portfolio Holder presented the paper that set out the Commissioning Strategy for Children's Services and the council's 5-year approach. The reason for the recommendation was that an effective strategy was the best way to understand, plan and deliver better outcomes. The report also been considered by the People and Health Overview Committee at its meeting 24 March 2022.

In a response to a question regarding the scope and scale for the strategy, the Corporate Director for Commissioning and Partnership advised that the strategy reached across all of the children's revenue budget spend, it also included external commissioned services and some capital spend. Further procurement plans were likely to come back for committee approval in the future.

Responding to a question, members were further advised that the strategy was likely to be scrutinised by committees and a performance management group meets regularly to ensure that projects and services were on track.

It was proposed by Cllr A Parry seconded by Cllr P Wharf

### **Decision**

That the 5-year Commissioning Strategy be approved, and the intended approach be adopted.

### **Reason for the decision**

Effective strategic commissioning is the main way to understand, plan and deliver better outcomes for residents. The strategy sets the direction for commissioning activity that would support the council's strategic aims to improve the well-being of children in Dorset over the next five years.

## **88. Safeguarding Families Together: new model**

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills and Early Help presented the report and the People and Health Overview Committee recommendation. This was

proposed as a pilot project in the Chesil area of Weymouth and Portland. The Quality Assurance Officer confirmed that this was an opportunity to build on existing locality arrangements and to be able to bring in specialist practitioners alongside front-line staff to deliver support and services in a holistic approach to children and their families.

In a response to a question Cabinet was advised that local member involvement and engagement was welcomed via the local alliance group.

It was proposed by Cllr A Parry and seconded by Cllr L Miller

### **Decision**

That the implementation of a pilot project in Chesil (Weymouth & Portland) for the Safeguarding Families Together new model, be approved.

### **Reason for the decision**

As part of the Delivering Locally priority within our Children Young People and Families plan 2020-2023, we committed to 'embed whole family approaches, with a particular focus on addressing the needs of children living with parental substance use, mental ill-health or domestic abuse'. The evidence base of this whole family approach was strong, and this project was part of the wider Transformation Programme within the Children Service's Directorate.

#### **89. Cabinet member update on policy development matter referred to an Overview Committee(s) for consideration**

There were no referrals to report.

#### **90. Portfolio Holder - Lead Member(s) Update Summary**

Portfolio Holder reports were attached to the minutes at Appendix 3.

#### **91. Climate & Ecological Emergency Executive Advisory Panel Update**

The Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment updated on the following:

- Decarbonisation of council buildings
- The appointment of Steven Ford as the Corporate Director for Climate & Ecological Sustainability
- The Portfolio Holder would be attending and speaking on the Council's achievements to date at the Public Sector's Estates Conference later in April.

#### **92. Urgent items**

There were no urgent items considered at the meeting.

#### **93. Exempt Business**



It was proposed by Cllr A Parry seconded by Cllr J Haynes

**Decision**

That the press and the public be excluded for the following item(s) in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 4 of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

94. **Strengthening Services for Children who are disabled**

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills and Early Help presented a report on strengthening services for children who are disabled.

**Decision**

That the work of the Strengthening Services for Children who are disabled be progressed as set out within the exempt report.

**Duration of meeting:** 10.00 - 11.36 am

**Chairman**

.....

This page is intentionally left blank

## **Question to Cabinet 5 April 2022**

### **1. Question from Councillor Kate Mason (on behalf of Alderholt Parish Council).**

Alderholt Parish Council would like to know the date in April 2022 when the Dorset Local Plan Pre-submission stage will be published or, if not in April, then the date at which this will take place.

### **Response from the Portfolio Holder for Planning**

The pre-submission publication of the Dorset Local Plan will no longer be taking place this spring, due to the length of time required to finalise some of the evidence base work. We will be updating the Local Development Scheme in due course but the earliest that publication could now take place would be the autumn.

This page is intentionally left blank

## Councillor Questions for Cabinet 1 March 2022

### **Question 1 from Cllr Jon Orrell**

Weymouth town centre has a conservation zone designation. Lately it has been at risk and 4 years ago a conservation officer achieved major renovation of town centre properties by various grades of enforcement action. This campaign ended and a recent inspection found various shop buildings would benefit from redecoration. Can a conservation officer be assigned to replicate the success of recent years?

### **Response from the Portfolio Holder for Planning**

The conservation enforcement work undertaken in Weymouth was funded by a specific budget and ended in October 2020. The specific role was time limited and funded prior to Dorset Council being formed.

Since then, the service has been restructured around the geography of the new Council area. The team covers a complex array of work across the whole of Dorset Council, and the demands on the team means that it is not feasible to have a dedicated officer covering Weymouth town centre alone. However, one of the Conservation Officers covers the area in and around Weymouth and Portland and part of the role includes assessing the expediency of enforcement action affecting heritage assets.

### **Question 2 from Cllr Jon Orrell**

Weymouth town centre has adverse crime statistics. The causes and cures lie beyond pure policing and link public health, housing, education and employment. The former Melcombe board brought together senior staff at a strategic level to coordinate action. This was lost after the formation of Dorset Council. The need to work together remains strong and the local police with the Business Improvement District "We are Weymouth" plus the town council are looking to rebuild this strategic approach. Can the council commit housing and public health input to this; the most hard pressed part of Dorset that needs levelling up?

### **Response from the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health**

Firstly, it is important to emphasise the Dorset Council is strongly committed to achieving the best possible outcomes for Weymouth and its residents. This includes the promotion of what works well in Weymouth, as well as addressing (and levelling up) where there is deprivation, crime, poor health, poor educational achievement or poor housing. Strategic leadership has been broadened and developed since the closure of the Melcombe Regis Board, and the focus on all areas of Weymouth is the right way forward, moving on from the emphasis on one Ward.

As one example of many, the Joint Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy has a priority focus on improving outcomes in disadvantaged and deprived communities, and targets much of its attention on Weymouth and Portland. LiveWell Dorset, for example, has higher uptake of its health improvement services in the most deprived areas, including Weymouth and Portland, and we work to remove barriers to people accessing support to improve their health. As a partnership across Public Health, Housing, Social Care and Voluntary Sectors we have also brought in significant new investment in drug and alcohol services in the last year, bringing benefits to people's health and well-being, and also reducing crime, anti-social behaviour and street homelessness. A further example is our Community Response pilot; this is a partnership between Social Care and Age UK supporting people to access resources in the Weymouth and Portland area enabling them to remain at home.

Operational delivery is important, and we work hard to make sure that this strategic leadership focuses on what matters to local residents and through effective local services. We commit to continue to be a vital part of the partnership approach described in the question, linking in with the Town Council, Business Improvement District and a range of agencies such as Dorset Police. This includes housing and public health, but is across all of our areas of influence, with a great deal of input from our People and Place directorates and portfolios into strategies such as our Stronger Neighbourhoods approach. As part of our collaborative approach, initiatives and ideas that are coming forward from the agencies mentioned in the question are always embraced, and we continue to work together to develop the best way forward for Weymouth.



## PORTFOLIO HOLDER/LEAD MEMBER UPDATE SUMMARY

PORTFOLIO:<sup>1</sup>

Highways, Travel and Environment

CABINET DATE:<sup>2</sup>

5<sup>th</sup> April 2022

KEY ACTIVITIES SINCE  
THE LAST REPORT:<sup>3</sup>

**Attended the following meetings:**

Dorset Highways Service Planning.  
 Low Carbon Dorset Board meeting.  
 Decarbonisation Board Meeting. We have a three-month extension to allow us to complete the entire programme.  
 Leadership Essentials Climate (Two days).  
 Highways Asset Risk and programming Board.  
 Dorset LNP Board Meeting.  
 Visit to Gillingham Principal Street (New Road).  
 Consultation review meeting.  
 LNP Annual Forum.  
 Meet with ORR re Wareham Crossing.  
 Local Transport Plan update meeting.  
 Review applications for Corporate Director  
 Meeting with National Highways re Tombstoning.  
 Climate Strategy Governance meeting.  
 Various meeting re Parking Services new parking charges.  
 Transforming Cities Fund Board Meeting.  
 Climate Change Meeting with NFU. (Had to leave due to car issue)  
 Strategic harbour Meeting  
 Coast and greenspace meeting  
 Landscapes review meeting.  
 Fleet Meeting.  
 Meeting re disposable Barbecue's  
 TCF Tour with senior members of DFT.  
 Various meeting re Renewable energy plans  
 Various meeting re Public Transport.

<sup>1</sup> Enter the portfolio area

<sup>2</sup> Insert the date of the Cabinet meeting to which this summary update is to be reported

<sup>3</sup> Provide brief details of the meetings attended, key activities or project milestones completed since the last report

DELEGATED DECISIONS  
MADE:<sup>4</sup>

None

ANTICIPATED  
ACTIVITIES/MILESTONES  
FOR NEXT PERIOD:<sup>5</sup>

Receive the result of the DC Bus service improvement Plan.  
Natural Capital (Dorset & North Devon)  
Western Gateway Meeting. I am lead ember of Public Transport.  
Dorset Travel Steering Group meeting.  
Discussions on Ferndown regeneration possibilities.  
Finalise arrangements for Verge to Verge.  
Interview for replacement Corporate Director.

---

<sup>4</sup> Enter details of any delegated decisions made since the last meeting

<sup>5</sup> Provide details of key activities, project milestones or significant meetings anticipated in the next period





**PORTFOLIO HOLDER/LEAD MEMBER UPDATE SUMMARY**

PORTFOLIO:<sup>1</sup>

**Tony Ferrari - Economic Growth, Assets & Property**

CABINET DATE:<sup>2</sup>

5<sup>th</sup> April 2022

KEY ACTIVITIES SINCE  
THE LAST REPORT:<sup>3</sup>

**South Walks House** – Lease signed with the NHS to bring care and jobs to Dorchester and further reduce the costs inherited when Dorset Council was formed.

**Pinemoor Allotments** - Weymouth completed and handed over to Weymouth Town Council

**Battlelab** – Practical Completion

DELEGATED DECISIONS  
MADE:<sup>4</sup>

None

---

<sup>1</sup> Enter the portfolio area

<sup>2</sup> Insert the date of the Cabinet meeting to which this summary update is to be reported

<sup>3</sup> Provide brief details of the meetings attended, key activities or project milestones completed since the last report

<sup>4</sup> Enter details of any delegated decisions made since the last meeting

ANTICIPATED  
ACTIVITIES/MILESTONES  
FOR NEXT PERIOD:<sup>5</sup>



---

<sup>5</sup> Provide details of key activities, project milestones or significant meetings anticipated in the next period



**PORTFOLIO HOLDER/LEAD MEMBER UPDATE SUMMARY**

PORTFOLIO:<sup>1</sup>

Corporate Development and Transformation

CABINET DATE:<sup>2</sup>

5<sup>th</sup> April 2022

KEY ACTIVITIES SINCE  
THE LAST REPORT:<sup>3</sup>

Informal Cabinet  
County hall refurbishment programme  
Leadership Performance  
Meetings on digital inclusion and new funding possibilities  
Further work on for LGA innovation zone proposals  
Several meetings regarding Cabinet papers  
Meeting on pay policy an  
Meeting re EDI and new proposed forum  
Several meetings with director for corporate development  
Ongoing review of mandatory staff training and database  
Review of digital strategy refresh  
Work on this year's Festival of the Future  
Up dates on Openreach contract  
Meeting with planners regarding new wireless masts

---

<sup>1</sup> Enter the portfolio area

<sup>2</sup> Insert the date of the Cabinet meeting to which this summary update is to be reported

<sup>3</sup> Provide brief details of the meetings attended, key activities or project milestones completed since the last report

DELEGATED DECISIONS  
MADE:<sup>4</sup>

None

ANTICIPATED  
ACTIVITIES/MILESTONES  
FOR NEXT PERIOD:<sup>5</sup>

Ongoing Performance Management process as next steps for the council to include benchmarking on both performance and financial spend  
Further work on timeline for transformation bids process and vision for 3, 5 & 10 years. As a follow on from the cabinet away day  
Further work on completion of one set of T's & C's for Dorset council  
Further information on Gigabit roll out and funding  
Further work on staff training and database  
Further work on Digital Strategy refresh  
Refresh of Corporate Plan

---

<sup>4</sup> Enter details of any delegated decisions made since the last meeting

<sup>5</sup> Provide details of key activities, project milestones or significant meetings anticipated in the next period

## PORTFOLIO HOLDER/LEAD MEMBER UPDATE SUMMARY

PORTFOLIO:<sup>1</sup>

Children, Education, Skills & Early Help

CABINET DATE:<sup>2</sup>

5.4.22

KEY ACTIVITIES SINCE  
THE LAST REPORT:<sup>3</sup>

**Overview Committee**

I am grateful to Cllr Parkes and members of the People & Health Overview Committee, for consideration of the following matters at their March meeting:

- Safeguarding Families Together
- Education Leadership Board
- Children's Commissioning Strategy
- Strengthen Services for Children who are disabled.

**School Visits**

West Moors Middle

Delighted to be invited to once again visit this school, which has undergone a huge improvement journey and can celebrate their success with recognition by Ofsted, with a recent Good rating.

Hazelbury Bryan Primary

At the suggestion of Cllr Batstone, Cllr Parry accompany Simon Hoare MP, on his visit to this rural school, in the North Dorset constituency.

**Dorset Virtual School**

The Virtual School under the leadership of Lisa Linscott (Principal teacher), & team of dedicated officers continues to perform well and at our most recent Governor Board Meeting welcomed 2 new Governors: Cllr Carole Jones & Michelle Whiting.

**Dorset Together – Ukraine**

I am delighted that Cllr Kerby, who has agreed to be the political lead for Children's Services in attendance at the Dorset Together meetings supporting the Ukrainian families programme and this fits within his role as Lead member for Safeguarding.

<sup>1</sup> Enter the portfolio area

<sup>2</sup> Insert the date of the Cabinet meeting to which this summary update is to be reported

<sup>3</sup> Provide brief details of the meetings attended, key activities or project milestones completed since the last report

**DELEGATED DECISIONS  
MADE:<sup>4</sup>**

**Corporate Director - Member Appointment**

Cabinet will be aware of the excellent work that Sarah-Jane Smedmor has been involved in at Dorset Council, as a Corporate Director. I am sure Cabinet would like to join me in thanking Sarah-Jane for her work with us and best well in her new appointment as the Executive Director for Children Services, at Central Bedfordshire Council.

A number of stakeholders were engaged in the interviewing rounds to select a successor to Sarah-Jane, with Cllr Parry (Chairing), Cllr Jane Somper & Cllr Stella Jones, sitting on the Members Panel. The recommendation was to appoint Paul Dempsey and we look forward to welcoming Paul, to Dorset Council.

**Independent Chair - Director Appointment**

Cllr Parry & Cllr Quayle, were invited to join a panel chaired by Theresa Leavy, tasked with interviewing candidates for the position of Independent Chair for the Dorset Education Board. Following a successful round of Interviews, I am delighted to report that former Education Minister, Stephen Twigg, has been appointed to this new role.

**ANTICIPATED  
ACTIVITIES/MILESTONES  
FOR NEXT PERIOD:<sup>5</sup>**

Ofsted Inspection of Coombe House School.

---

<sup>4</sup> Enter details of any delegated decisions made since the last meeting

<sup>5</sup> Provide details of key activities, project milestones or significant meetings anticipated in the next period



## The Cabinet Forward Plan - June to September 2022 (Publication date 24 May 2022)

This Forward Plan contains future items to be considered by the Cabinet and Council. It is published 28 days before the next meeting of the Committee. The plan includes items for the meeting including key decisions. Each item shows if it is 'open' to the public or to be considered in a private part of the meeting.

### Definition of Key Decisions

Key decisions are defined in Dorset Council's Constitution as decisions of the Cabinet which are likely to -

- Pa  
9  
27
- a) to result in the relevant local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the relevant local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates (**Thresholds - £500k**); or
  - b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the relevant local authority."

In determining the meaning of "*significant*" for these purposes the Council will have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State in accordance with section 9Q of the Local Government Act 2000 Act. Officers will consult with lead members to determine significance and sensitivity.

### Cabinet Portfolio Holders 2021/22

<b>Spencer Flower</b>	Leader / Governance, Performance and Communications
<b>Peter Wharf</b>	Deputy Leader / Adult Social Care and Health
<b>Gary Suttle</b>	Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy
<b>Ray Bryan</b>	Highways, Travel and Environment
<b>Graham Carr-Jones</b>	Housing and Community Safety
<b>Jill Haynes</b>	Corporate Development and Transformation
<b>Laura Miller</b>	Culture, Communities and Customer Services
<b>Andrew Parry</b>	Children, Education, Skills and Early Help
<b>Tony Ferrari</b>	Economic Growth, Assets & Property
<b>David Walsh</b>	Planning

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
<b>May</b>					
<p><b>Revised Inter Authority Agreement for Joint Archives Service</b></p> <p><b>Key Decision</b> - Yes <b>Public Access</b> - Open</p> <p>The item is subject to internal governance at BCP Council and may be delayed if unable to progress in the for cut off dates at Dorset Council.</p>	<p><b>Decision Maker</b> Cabinet</p>	<p><b>Decision Date</b> 17 May 2022</p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Culture, Communities and Customer Services</p>	<p><i>Lisa Cotton, Head of Customer Services, Libraries &amp; Archives lisa.cotton@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, Place (John Sellgren), Director of Legal and Democratic Services - Monitoring Officer (Jonathan Mair)</i></p>
<p><b>Minimum Income Guarantees in Charges for Adult Social Care and Support</b></p> <p><b>Key Decision</b> - Yes <b>Public Access</b> - Open</p> <p>A review of the appropriateness of continuing to use those published, national minimum MIG rates in Dorset will be presented in accordance with the Care Act 2014 statutory guidance. The review will consider option for MIG rates that are equal to, and greater than, the national minimum rates.</p>	<p><b>Decision Maker</b> Cabinet</p>	<p><b>Decision Date</b> 17 May 2022</p>		<p>Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health</p>	<p><i>Michael Ford, Policy &amp; Project Manager michael.ford@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Steve Veevers, Corporate Director Operations, Adult Care steve.veevers@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, People - Adults</i></p>
<p><b>Re-procurement of the Learning and Development Framework for Children and Adult Services</b></p>	<p><b>Decision Maker</b> Cabinet</p>	<p><b>Decision Date</b> 17 May 2022</p>		<p>Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health, Portfolio Holder</p>	<p><i>Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)</i></p>



Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
<p><b>Key Decision - Yes</b> <b>Public Access - Open</b></p> <p>Re-procuring the current framework for training providers to deliver courses for Children's Services (including the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership) and Adults and Housing Services. The total value is approximately £2m over the 4 years of the framework.</p>				for Children, Education, Skills and Early Help	
<p><b>Youth Justice Plan</b></p> <p><b>Key Decision - Yes</b> <b>Public Access - Open</b></p> <p>To approve the Youth Justice Plan.</p>	<p><b>Decision Maker</b> <b>Dorset Council</b></p>	<p><b>Decision Date</b> <b>14 Jul 2022</b></p>	<p>Cabinet People and Health Overview Committee 17 May 2022 3 May 2022</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills and Early Help</p>	<p><i>David Webb, Manager - Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service david.webb@bcpcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)</i></p>
<p>June</p>					

<p><b>Finance report - outturn 2021/2022</b></p> <p><b>Key Decision - Yes</b> <b>Public Access - Open</b></p> <p>To consider the Council's performance against its revenue budget in 2021/22 and the impact this has upon reserves, including the general fund.</p>	<p><b>Decision Maker</b> <b>Cabinet</b></p>	<p><b>Decision Date</b> <b>21 Jun 2022</b></p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy</p>	<p><i>Jim McManus, Corporate Director - Finance and Commercial J.McManus@dorsetcc.gov.uk Executive Director, Corporate Development - Section 151 Officer (Aidan Dunn)</i></p>
---	---	--	--	--	---

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
<p><b>Stinsford Neighbourhood Plan 2021 - 2038</b></p> <p><b>Key Decision</b> - Yes <b>Public Access</b> - Open</p> <p>Report relates to the making (adoption) of the Stinsford Neighbourhood Plan 2021-2038.</p>	<p><b>Decision Maker Cabinet</b></p>	<p><b>Decision Date 21 Jun 2022</b></p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Planning</p>	<p><i>Nick Cardnell, Senior Planning Officer Nick.cardnell@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, Place (John Sellgren)</i></p>
<p><b>July</b></p>					
<p><b>Quarter 1 Council Plan Monitoring Report</b></p> <p><b>Key Decision</b> - No <b>Public Access</b> - Open</p> <p>A quarterly report on the delivery of the council's plan</p>	<p><b>Decision Maker Cabinet</b></p>	<p><b>Decision Date 26 Jul 2022</b></p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Corporate Development and Transformation</p>	<p><i>Rebecca Forrester, Business Intelligence &amp; Performance rebecca.forrester@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Chief Executive (Matt Prosser)</i></p>
<p><b>Quarter 1 2022/23 Financial Monitoring Report</b></p> <p><b>Key Decision</b> - No <b>Public Access</b> - Open</p> <p>To consider the Quarter 2 Financial Monitoring Report 2022/23.</p>	<p><b>Decision Maker Cabinet</b></p>	<p><b>Decision Date 26 Jul 2022</b></p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy</p>	<p><i>Jim McManus, Corporate Director - Finance and Commercial J.McManus@dorsetcc.gov.uk Executive Director, Corporate Development - Section 151 Officer (Aidan Dunn)</i></p>
<p><b>Home to School and Post 16 Transport Policies</b></p> <p><b>Key Decision</b> - Yes <b>Public Access</b> - Open</p>	<p><b>Decision Maker Cabinet</b></p>	<p><b>Decision Date 26 Jul 2022</b></p>	<p>People and Health Overview Committee 28 Jun 2022</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Corporate Development and Transformation, Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and</p>	<p><i>Ed Denham, School Admissions Manager ed.denham@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)</i></p>

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
<p>This is statutory requirement to consult on the Home to School and Post Transport policies. These are the policies for 2022-2023 academic year.</p>				Environment	
<p><b>Modern Slavery Transparency Statement</b></p> <p><b>Key Decision</b> - Yes <b>Public Access</b> - Open</p> <p>Currently local authorities are not required to provide a statement under S54 of the Modern Slavery Act (not in-scope). Government and LGA have advised that there will be legislative change which will bring local authorities in scope of S54 therefore ahead of any change, local authorities have been asked to ensure that they have a transparency statement and register it on the Governments Modern Slavery Statement Register before 30 September 2022.</p>	<p><b>Decision Maker</b> <b>Cabinet</b></p>	<p><b>Decision Date</b> <b>26 Jul 2022</b></p>	<p>Place and Resources Overview Committee 7 Jun 2022</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Corporate Development and Transformation</p>	<p><i>Dawn Adams, Service Manager for Commercial and Procurement</i> <i>dawn.adams@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, Corporate Development - Section 151 Officer (Aidan Dunn)</i></p>
<p><b>Care Dorset update</b></p> <p><b>Key Decision</b> - No <b>Public Access</b> - Open</p> <p>To consider s report on the principles of the Shareholder Agreement and committee structure for Care Dorset.</p>	<p><b>Decision Maker</b> <b>Cabinet</b></p>	<p><b>Decision Date</b> <b>26 Jul 2022</b></p>		<p>Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health</p>	<p><i>Steve Veevers, Corporate Director Operations, Adult Care</i> <i>steve.veevers@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Derek Hoddinott, Programme Lead</i> <i>derek.hoddinott@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, People - Adults</i></p>

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
<p><b>Establishment of a Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset</b></p> <p><b>Key Decision - No</b> <b>Public Access - Open</b></p> <p>To establish a committee of the Executive for the Council's shareholder function fro Care Dorset and to agree the terms of reference for the committee.</p>	<p><b>Decision Maker Cabinet</b></p>	<p><b>Decision Date 26 Jul 2022</b></p>		<p>Leader of the Council</p>	<p><i>Grace Evans, Head of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer</i> <i>grace.evans@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Director of Legal and Democratic Services - Monitoring Officer (Jonathan Mair)</i></p>
<p><b>Adult Social Care - Future Services</b></p> <p><b>Key Decision - Yes</b> <b>Public Access - Fully exempt</b></p> <p>Options for future Adult Social Care Services</p>	<p><b>Decision Maker Cabinet</b></p>	<p><b>Decision Date 21 Jun 2022</b></p>		<p>Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health</p>	<p><i>Steve Veevers, Corporate Director Operations, Adult Care</i> <i>steve.veevers@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, People - Adults</i></p>
<p><b>September</b></p>					

<p><b>Harbours Governance and functions</b></p> <p><b>Key Decision - Yes</b> <b>Public Access - Open</b></p> <p>To consider a change to Dorset Council Harbours governance and functions making it an executive function.</p>	<p><b>Decision Maker Dorset Council</b></p>	<p><b>Decision Date 13 Oct 2022</b></p>	<p>Cabinet 6 Sep 2022</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment</p>	<p><i>Ken Buchan, Head of Environment and Wellbeing</i> <i>ken.buchan@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Director of Legal and Democratic Services - Monitoring Officer (Jonathan Mair), John Sellgren</i></p>
---	---	---	-------------------------------	--	---

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
<p><b>Additional Procurement Forward Plan Report - over £500k (2022 - 2023)</b></p> <p><b>Key Decision</b> - Yes <b>Public Access</b> - Open</p> <p>The Cabinet is asked to consider the contents of this report in respect of proposed contracts to be procured 2022-2023 which are in addition to those on the procurement forward plan approved by Cabinet on 1 March 2022.</p>	<p><b>Decision Maker Cabinet</b></p>	<p><b>Decision Date 6 Sep 2022</b></p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy</p>	<p><i>Dawn Adams, Service Manager for Commercial and Procurement dawn.adams@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, Corporate Development - Section 151 Officer (Aidan Dunn)</i></p>
<p><b>October</b></p>					
<p><b>November</b></p>					
<p><b>Quarter 2 2022/23 Financial Monitoring Report</b></p> <p><b>Key Decision</b> - No <b>Public Access</b> - Open</p> <p>To consider the Quarter 2 Financial Monitoring Report for 2022/23.</p>	<p><b>Decision Maker Cabinet</b></p>	<p><b>Decision Date 1 Nov 2022</b></p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy</p>	<p><i>Jim McManus, Corporate Director - Finance and Commercial J.McManus@dorsetcc.gov.uk Executive Director, Corporate Development - Section 151 Officer (Aidan Dunn)</i></p>
<p><b>December</b></p>					
<p><b>Quarter 3 2022/23 Financial Monitoring Report</b></p>	<p><b>Decision Maker Cabinet</b></p>	<p><b>Decision Date 17 Jan 2023</b></p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial</p>	<p><i>Jim McManus, Corporate Director - Finance and</i></p>

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
<p><b>Key Decision</b> - Yes  <b>Public Access</b> - Open</p> <p>To consider the Quarter 3 Financial Monitoring Report for 2022/23.</p>				and Capital Strategy	<p><i>Commercial  J.McManus@dorsetcc.gov.uk  Executive Director,  Corporate Development -  Section 151 Officer (Aidan  Dunn)</i></p>

### **Private/Exempt Items for Decision**

Each item in the plan above marked as 'private' will refer to one of the following paragraphs.

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the shadow council proposes:-
  - (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
  - (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

This page is intentionally left blank



## Cabinet 7 May 2022 Revised Inter-Authority Agreement for Joint Archives Service

### For Decision

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr L Miller, Customer and Community Services

**Local Councillor(s):** All

**Executive Director:** J Mair, Corporate Director, Legal & Democratic

Report Author: Sam Johnston

Title: Service Manager for Archives and Records

Tel: 01305 228929

Email: [sam.johnston@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:sam.johnston@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

**Report Status:** Public

#### Recommendations:

1. Cabinet approves the adoption of the revised Inter-Authority Agreement with BCP Council over the provision of the Joint Archives Service.

#### Reason for Recommendations:

To enable and underwrite proper political, financial and strategic oversight of the Joint Archives Service.

To provide relevant governance structure to oversee both the strategic direction and standard of service delivered to residents. Ensuring that both governance and accountability are clearly retained by the partner local authorities.

#### 1. Executive Summary

The Joint Archives Service (JAS) based at Dorset History Centre (DHC) in Dorchester is funded pro rata to population by Dorset Council and BCP Council. The JAS has been governed since 1997 by a tripartite Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) signed that year between Dorset County Council, Bournemouth Borough Council and Borough of Poole, the three first tier councils then operating in Dorset. To allow continuity, the 1997 agreement was maintained through local government reorganisation in 2019. Following a consultant-led review of the JAS, which reported in February 2021, and gathered opinions from officers and councillors, it was agreed at a meeting of the Joint Archives Advisory Board in April 2021 that the governance of the JAS required updating. This was in order to reflect both the new unitary council arrangements and the modern context in which the service operates. The agreement in Appendix 1 is the outcome of that

process. On 30 March 2022 the Joint Archives Advisory Board endorsed the Inter-Authority Agreement and revised governance model as detailed in Schedule 5 of the agreement in appendix 1.

## **2. Financial Implications**

There are no new financial implications for either authority as a result of this agreement. The IAA clarifies the agreed approach to both the revenue (including reserves) budget and capital funding of the JAS.

## **3. Well-being and Health Implications**

None

## **4. Climate implications**

None

## **5. Other Implications**

None

## **6. Risk Assessment**

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

Current Risk: Medium

Residual Risk: Medium

## **7. Equalities Impact Assessment**

The JAS has a full EQIA which is currently being updated and refreshed to align with our service plan and strategic aims. This will be published with our service plan in due course. Further areas that are being considered include working with younger people and with black and ethnic minority groups and religious minorities. Improved digital provision will also assist in providing greater access to collections for people living at some distance from Dorchester.

## **8. Appendices**

Appendix 1: Inter-Authority Agreement on Archives, 2022

## **9. Background Papers**

Joint Archives Agreement, 1997

### **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.

## **1. Background**

1.1 The Dorset Archives Service (as it was first called) now based at Dorset History Centre (DHC) in Dorchester, and prior to that in the basement of County Hall, Dorchester has existed since 1955. In 1997, as result of local government organisation, the 'Joint Archives Service' (JAS) was created – to reflect the decision of Bournemouth Borough Council and Borough of Poole Council that they wished with Dorset County Council to maintain a jointly-delivered archive function. This shared endeavour was detailed in the Joint Archives Agreement (JAA) of 1997 and signed by the three councils in that year. From this point forward in the report to aid clarity the JAA will be referred to as the 'Inter-Authority Agreement' (IAA). The 1997 IAA clarified:

- Key functions
- Statutory and best practice standards relating to archives
- Staffing
- Assets of the service
- Duration of the agreement – which was in effect open-ended with a 3-year notice period
- Policies and procedures
- Dispute resolution
- Revenue budget and its apportionment
- Role of the Joint Archives Advisory Board

1.2 Oversight of the JAS is currently delivered via the Joint Archives Advisory Board (JAAB) which is made up of four councillors from each council including the two portfolio holders from BCP and Dorset Councils.

## **2. Local government reorganisation**

2.1 The IAA was maintained through and beyond Local Government Reorganisation in 2019. However, as the original three signatory councils no longer existed and the IAA itself was somewhat outdated in certain respects, it became increasingly clear that a revised agreement was necessary.

## **3. Consultancy review**

3.1 A consultancy review of the JAS was initiated in early 2020. The purpose of the review was to identify if and how the service might improve and what its strategic direction should be. Also within scope was a review of the governance of the JAS. The review was published in February 2021 following delays due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The report gave a largely positive review of the JAS and its activities. It was recommended that the governance of the JAS be refreshed as part of the JAS's forward plan.

3.2 At its April meeting, the JAAB recommended: "That the future governance of the JAS in the light of the consultants' recommendations is reviewed and delegates responsibility to Legal Services staff of BCP and DC Councils to generate one or more options for consideration be supported." A draft revision of the IAA has been under consideration for several months.

## **4. Revised agreement**

4.1 The revised IAA is attached to this report. The purpose of the IAA is to:

- Update the signatories of the IAA to reflect the two recently-formed (2019) unitary funding councils
- Reaffirm the commitment of the two councils to the JAS and to the cost-efficiencies and economies of scale that it provides
- Clarify the formula for both revenue and capital funding of the service
- Reflect the updated legislative and best practice framework
- Ensure cogency with other IAAs that relate to joint services
- Propose a revised governance structure and terms of reference to deliver proportionate, dedicated and strategic oversight of the JAS.

## 5. Governance Model for the Joint Archives Service

5.1 In April 2021 the Joint Archives Advisory Board approved recommendation from consultancy review to adopt a revised governance model. This was progressed in line with the review of the Inter-authority Agreement and at its meeting on 30 March 2022 the Joint Archives Advisory Board endorsed the revised model in order to:

- Strengthen governance to oversee and steer strategic direction through a dedicated group of councillors and officers
- Increase the frequency of meetings to improve momentum, knowledge (at least 2 but probably 3 per year) and engagement
- Include non-voting membership of external partners and Dorset Archives Trust (the service's support charity) when appropriate
- Adopt a revised Terms of Reference to include:
  - Acting as a focussed, strategic board in place with the opportunity to steer service development, support council business, residents, efficiency and future investment.
  - Ensure the JAS is enabled to deliver services through direct support and advocacy supporting development of a network of appropriate contacts across both Unitary Councils to raise profile, deliver against council priorities and demonstrate value for money

5.2 The revised agreement has been carefully considered by officers from both councils. Advice from both Legal and Finance colleagues has been sought and incorporated to ensure that where possible the IAA is consistent with other areas of joint activity between the two councils. The IAA has a series of schedules which clarify and expand upon certain areas of the service and its governance. These are:

- The function – legislation and standards
- The services of the Joint Archives Service
- Staffing establishment – functions delivered by the Joint Archives Service
- Finance and cost share
- Governance arrangements for the Joint Archives Service
- Archive assets
- Data protection

5.3 To achieve the recommended approach our proposal is to establish a new **Joint Archives Board** with Membership proposed as follows:

- Portfolio holder plus two further Elected Members from each of the two Unitary Councils (6 Members) plus appropriate designated officers from both BCP and Dorset Councils such as appropriate Director *and or* Head of Service for Dorset Council and appropriate

Director *and or* Head of Service for BCP Council *and* Service Manager Archives and Records Management (Shared BCP and Dorset Council Role)

- The issues associated with the IAA and the proposed new Joint Archives Board were discussed and endorsed at a meeting of the Joint Archives Advisory Board on 30 March 2022.
- Other officers (e.g. finance, specialist cultural or other executive directors) could be invited to attend the board for items of interest, but will not be Board members.

5.4 In reviewing other Joint Boards or Committee structures, including Public Health and Skills and Learning, the proposed membership and structure would be considered an appropriate size and strategic level.

## **6. Conclusion**

6.1 The new IAA has been completed, has been reviewed and approved by the current Joint Archives Advisory Board, at its meeting of 30 March 2022, and is appended for information and scrutiny.

It provides an updated approach to overseeing the JAS with relevant and appropriate safeguards to both councils in terms of their respective investments in the service. Furthermore, it provides stability and continuity for the JAS as it works to preserve Dorset's recorded history now and in the future.

This page is intentionally left blank

**Joint Archive Service - Inter-Authority Agreement**

This Agreement made this                      day of                      2022 between:

**Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (“BCP”) whose principal place of business is Town Hall, Bourne Avenue, Bournemouth, BH2 6EB of one part**

**and**

**Dorset Council (“DC”) whose principal place of business is County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester DT1 1XJ of the second part**

**together the ‘parties’.**

**Background**

- A. At the date of this Agreement, DC is the Principal Council responsible for the custody of archives for the county of Dorset under the provision of Section 224 of the Local Government Act 1972 (“the 1972 Act”).**
- B. This service was governed by the Agreement for Archive Services between Dorset County Council, Bournemouth Borough Council and Poole Borough Council dated 5 February 1997 (the First Agreement).**
- C. Under the terms of the 1972 Act and the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structural Changes Order 2018 the two unitary councils of BCP and DC were created and assumed responsibility as unitary authorities for their respective areas on 1 April 2019.**
- D. By virtue of Section 101 of the 1972 Act local authorities may make certain arrangements for the discharge of any of their functions and by virtue of Section 1 of the Local Authorities (Goods and Services) Act 1970, a local authority and any other public body may enter into agreement for the provision of certain services.**
- E. The parties agree that, from the date of this Agreement, the First Agreement shall be terminated and the parties shall operate joint arrangements for the discharge of the Service in accordance with the terms of this Agreement. This Agreement underwrites the wish of the parties to continue the Service as a joint endeavour.**

**1. Definitions**

**1.1. For the purposes of this Agreement the following words shall have the following meanings:**

<b>Agreement</b>	<b>means this agreement including all schedules and related documents;</b>
<b>Archive Assets</b>	<b>means the collections of historically significant documents and other assets which is stored and managed by DC, but which are owned either by DC or by BCP and described in Schedule 7, also referred to as Archives or Archive Collections.</b>

<b>Assets</b>	means all assets, both physical and intellectual, associated with the delivery of the Services but excluding the Archive Assets.
<b>Authorised Officer</b>	means the officer appointed by a party to be the main point of contact for that party in respect of this Agreement and to undertake the actions described in clause 10.  The Authorised Officer for DC is: [Lisa Cotton, Head of Customer, Libraries and Archives]  The Authorised Officer for BCP is: [Matti Raudsepp, Director – Customer and Business Management]  names and roles may change as required and instructed by either party.
<b>Costs of the Services</b>	has the meaning given in Schedule 4;
<b>Data Protection Legislation</b>	has the meaning given in Schedule 7;
<b>JAB</b>	means the Joint Archives Board as described in clause 4 and Schedule 5
<b>Freedom of Information Legislation</b>	the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 ( <i>SI 2004/3391</i> ) plus any subordinate legislation made under these from time to time, together with any guidance and/or codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner or relevant government department in relation to such legislation.
<b>Function</b>	means the function as described in Schedule 1;
<b>Transition Period</b>	Means the final 12 months of the Term of this Agreement howsoever it is terminated.
<b>JAS</b>	Joint Archive Service
<b>Services</b>	means the services as described in Schedule 2;
<b>Term</b>	has the meaning given in clause 3.1;

## 2. Scope of Agreement

2.1. In exercise of the powers contained within Section 101 of the 1972 Act and Section 1 of the 1970 Act, BCP and DC hereby arrange that the Services required for the discharge of the Function shall be provided by means of a joint arrangement in accordance with the conditions herein.

## 3. Period of the Agreement

3.1. This Agreement shall commence on the date of this agreement and continue until terminated in accordance with the terms of this Agreement (the Term).

3.2. Either party may terminate this Agreement, by serving written notice of no less than 36 months to take effect on the 31 March of any year.

3.3. If a termination notice is served prior to the fifth anniversary of the date of this Agreement, a lump sum payment shall be paid by the terminating party. This payment shall cover the costs of the non-terminating



party directly associated with the termination, providing the non-terminating party has taken all reasonable steps to mitigate these costs.

3.4. Either party may terminate the Agreement by giving 12 months written notice where the other party has committed a material breach of this Agreement and has not rectified this in accordance with the directions of the Joint Archives Board.

#### 4. Joint Board for Archive Service [Governance and Terms of Reference – Schedule 5)

4.1. There shall be Joint Archives Board to oversee this Agreement and the work of the JAS. The board will consist of relevant senior officers and councillors drawn in equal numbers from both parties.

#### 5. Services to be provided

5.1. DC undertakes to host and manage archive Services in a professional, cost-effective and business-like manner in accordance with such appropriate or relevant statutory or regulatory standards, including but not limited to; Archives Accreditation, the Public Records Acts (1958 and 1967), Data Protection Legislation and Freedom of Information Legislation in accordance with the terms of this Agreement.

5.2. The JAS will be managed in accordance with the best current professional practices and will constantly seek to improve and change where opportunity exists to increase the quality and value for money of the service. The JAS will where possible be benchmarked against other services of its type to ensure that it continues to meet appropriate standards and cost efficiency.

5.3. DC shall administer and host the provision of what they consider to be appropriate facilities, central support services and business management as are reasonably required for efficient and proper delivery of the Services in the discharge of the Function.

5.4. DC will provide sufficient storage for archives of an appropriate and standards-compliant type on behalf of both parties.

5.5. The Services shall be provided within cost limits and budgets agreed annually by the parties. In this respect the Joint Archives Board shall recommend budgets annually to the parties and DC shall submit to BCP such estimates, statements and other information as may be reasonably required by the relevant financial officers of BCP.

#### 6. Joint Archives Service: Establishment

6.1. DC shall establish a suitably resourced structure and employ persons of professional experience, ability and skills for the proper provision of the Services in discharge of the Function and shall be responsible for all terms and conditions of employment of such persons. Notwithstanding any transfer of any such staff that would otherwise take place by means of a Statutory Transfer Order made within the framework of the Local Government Act 1992 such staff shall continue to be employed by DC.

6.2. Schedule 1 identifies the functions to be deployed by DC in the provision of the Services in discharge of the Function.

6.3. The JAS will develop any case for change and make recommendations to the Joint Archives Board in respect of any establishment changes, staff developments, growth requirements or restructuring proposals as and when required. Where changes will require an increase in budget above that set out in the budget agreed in accordance with clause 5.4, the proposed budget increase shall be referred to each party for approval. Such change shall only be implemented once approved by both parties.

## **7. Assets and Archive Assets**

- 7.1. All Assets together with rights and liabilities that is for the time being made available for the use of DC in providing the Services in the discharge of the Function shall continue to be made available and used notwithstanding the possible transfer of ownership pursuant to the provisions of the Local Government Changes for England (Property Transfer and Transitional Payment) Regulations 1995.**
- 7.2. All Archive Assets shall remain in the ownership of the party who committed them (via deposit or transfer) to the Service.**

## **8. Payments**

- 8.1. In consideration of the delivery Function and Services by DC, BCP shall pay DC the sums calculated in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 4 as they fall due.**
- 8.2. All sums payable under this agreement unless otherwise stated are exclusive of VAT and other duties and taxes. Should any VAT or other duties or taxes be due or become payable in respect of such sums, it shall be payable in addition to such sums.**

## **9. Policies and procedures**

- 9.1. In providing the Services and in the discharge of the Function under this Agreement on behalf of the parties, DC shall conform to such policies and procedures as may be recommended by the Joint Archives Board and approved by DC and BCP's appropriate committees and shall secure that the Services provided will enable the Function to be discharged on an integrated basis.**
- 9.2. The Service Manager for Archives and Records shall regularly report on the provision of the Service to the Joint Archives Board.**

## **10. Communication**

- 10.1. The parties shall each appoint an Authorised Officer as the prime points of contact for the purposes and rights and powers conferred by this Agreement upon each party. Each party will immediately inform the other of any change in the Authorised Officer .**
- 10.2. The parties shall agree from time to time and operate procedures through the Authorised Officers for the coordination of service planning, access and delivery and for monitoring and the execution of this Agreement.**
- 10.3. For the avoidance of doubt the parties declare that in the discharge of the Function (including any investigation into maladministration) all reasonable assistance and access at all reasonable times to information, documentation and data shall be provided on a reciprocal basis.**
- 10.4. The records of the Joint Archives Board (agenda papers, minutes etc) will be published on the relevant section of DC's website. Wider information about the JAS – its activities, collections, terms of access and services to the public will be communicated through a wide range of digital and social media.**

## **11. Freedom of Information and Data Protection**

- 11.1. The parties acknowledge that they are each subject to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Legislation, and they shall:**

- 11.1.1. provide all necessary assistance and cooperation as reasonably requested by the other party to enable the other party to comply with its obligations under the Freedom of Information Legislation;
- 11.1.2. transfer to the other party all requests for information relating to that other party as soon as practicable and in any event within 2 Working Days of receipt;
- 11.1.3. provide the other party with a copy of all information belonging to that party requested in the request for information which is in its possession or as soon as reasonably practicable.

11.2. DC shall be responsible for responding to requests for information which relate to the provision of the Services or undertaking the Functions.

11.3. Each party acknowledges that the other party may be required under the Freedom of Information Legislation to disclose Information (including commercially sensitive information) without consulting or obtaining consent from the other party. The responding party shall take reasonable steps to notify the other party of a Request for Information (in accordance with the Cabinet Office's Freedom of Information Code of Practice issued under section 45 of the FOIA) to the extent that it is permissible and reasonably practical for it to do so but (notwithstanding any other provision in this Agreement).

11.4. The parties agree to comply with the provisions of Schedule 8 in relation to Data Protection.

## 12. Variations

12.1. Any variations to the Agreement shall be in writing and signed on behalf of all the parties before they take effect.

12.2. DC shall not be obliged to carry out additional or varied Services until and unless agreement has been reached between the parties as to the amount of payment for such additions and/or variations.

## 13. Waiver

13.1. The failure by either party to enforce at any time or for any period any one or more of the terms or conditions of this Agreement shall not be a waiver of them or their right at any time to enforce the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

## 14. Standing orders etc.

14.1. Any contract for the execution of work or for the supply of goods and services made by DC in the provision of the Services in the discharge of the Function shall comply with DC's constitution.

## 15. Indemnity and claims

15.1. DC shall ensure that its normal arrangements (including self-insurance funding) are effected and maintained in respect of any negligent act, accidental error or omission resulting in any legal liability to a third party associated with the carrying out of the Services under the terms of this Agreement.

15.2. The costs of all premiums and self-funding contributions relating to the insurance arrangements shall form part of the Costs of the Services set out in Schedule 4 to this Agreement.

15.3. Any liability incurred to a third party by DC or BCP relating to the joint discharge of the Function under the terms of this Agreement shall be satisfied from any applicable insurance provision specified in

**Clause XX.** Provided that if liability falls partly or wholly outside such provision the cost thereof shall form part of the Costs of the Services set out in Schedule 4 to this Agreement.

**15.4.** Any claim pursuant to Clause XX shall be handled by DC. DC shall keep BCP informed as necessary of the progress and outcome of any such claim.

## **16. Partnership and relationship management including dispute resolution**

**16.1.** Both parties shall agree to work together in a collaborative business-like manner. They will ensure that they use their best endeavours and will engage openly and proactively to resolve all business matters, service issues, required performance improvements, risks and most importantly - recognition of the Service's successes.

**16.2.** Both parties will ensure their employee behaviours and values are upheld and quality service management and reputation are maintained.

**16.3.** Both parties will ensure equality, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of the business working to positive community and employee outcomes ensuring that the JAS vision meets both parties' principles and values. Officers and members will collaborate to provide positive guidance, advice and encourage development in a solution focussed way.

**16.4.** If a dispute or service failure is identified both parties will use negotiation and agreement to proactively resolve, investigate and mitigate risk to either party by working this Agreement including any claim pursuant to Clause XX any variation in accordance with Clause XX.

**16.5.** If the Authorised Officers are unable to agree a resolution to a dispute, then the matter shall be referred to Joint Archives Board for consideration in accordance with the principles of clause 16.4.

**16.6.** If the Joint Archives Board is unable to resolve the dispute in a timely matter, it shall be referred to the senior executive or appropriate authorised officer assigned by each partner. In the unlikely event of failure to agree at this level, the issue shall be referred for determination to a mutually agreed arbiter.

## **17. Notices**

**17.1.** Any notice or other communication given to a party under or in connection with this Agreement shall be in writing and shall be delivered by hand or by pre-paid first-class post or other next working day delivery service at the recipient's principal place of business;

**17.2.** Any notice or communication shall be deemed to have been received:

**17.2.1.** if delivered by hand, at the time the notice is left at the proper address; or

**17.2.2.** if sent by pre-paid first-class post or other next working day delivery service, at 9.00 am on the second working day after posting;

**17.3.** This clause does not apply to the service of any proceedings or other documents in any legal action or, where applicable, any arbitration or other method of dispute resolution.

## **18. Consequences of Termination**

**18.1.** During the Transition Period the parties shall agree:

- 18.1.1. the process for transfer of Archive Assets to their owning party in accordance with Schedule 7;
- 18.1.2. the division, responsibility and transfer (where necessary) for all other Assets;
- 18.1.3. whether confidential information shall be destroyed a returned and the relevant return date if applicable;
- 18.1.4. the value of any outstanding liabilities relating to Term of the Agreement, including the Transition Period and determine a payment date for the same where relevant;
- 18.1.5. the amount of any redundancy costs where the staff do not move to other employment in accordance with clause 19 Liability for redundancy costs shall be calculated in accordance with clause 19.1.

19. If upon termination DC wish to reduce staff numbers, then the parties shall work together in good faith to determine any relevant TUPE or TUPE equivalent process to support employment in a separation process or in the case of any external outsourcing arrangement. If any staff engaged with the Services during the Transition Period are be entitled to redeployment then the parties agree that the staff shall be eligible for opportunities within both DC and BCP.

19.1. Where redundancy costs are incurred, all proper and reasonable redundancy costs relating to such terminations shall be met by both parties pro rata to the agreed funding formula for the Service.

## 20. Third Party Rights

20.1. This Agreement does not give rise to any rights under the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 to enforce any term of this agreement.

20.2. The rights of the parties to rescind or vary this agreement are not subject to the consent of any other person.

## 21. Entire Agreement

21.1. This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the parties and supersedes and extinguishes all previous agreements (including the First Agreement), promises, assurances, warranties, representations and understandings between them, whether written or oral, relating to its subject matter.

21.2. Each party agrees that it shall have no remedies in respect of any statement, representation, assurance or warranty (whether made innocently or negligently) that is not set out in this agreement. Each party agrees that it shall have no claim for innocent or negligent misrepresentation based on any statement in this Agreement.

## 22. Assignment and other dealings

22.1. This Agreement is personal to the parties and neither party shall assign, transfer, mortgage, charge, subcontract, delegate, declare a trust over or deal in any other manner with any of its rights and obligations under this Agreement except in the case of a statutory transfer of powers to a new body.

## 23. Governing Law

**23.1. This Agreement and any dispute or claim (including non-contractual disputes or claims) arising out of or in connection with it or its subject matter or formation shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the law of England and Wales.**

**24. Jurisdiction**

**24.1. Each party irrevocably agrees that the courts of England and Wales shall have exclusive jurisdiction to settle any dispute or claim (including non-contractual disputes or claims) arising out of or in connection with this agreement or its subject matter or formation.**

**24.2. In Witness whereof the parties have caused their Common Seals to be hereunto affixed in the presence of:-**

**[Add in execution blocks]**

DRAFT

**Schedule 1**  
**The Function – legislation and standards**

The key functions of the archive service (Organisational Health, Collections and Stakeholder Engagement) linked to various of the statutes below are reviewed and assessed as part of Archives Accreditation which is overseen by The National Archives.

The JAS is an accredited archive service and is a recognised Place of Deposit for Public Records.

The following items all inform, mandate or govern work undertaken by the JAS:

- **Law of Property Act 1922 (as amended by the Law of Property (Amendment) Act 1924)**
- **Tithe Act 1936**
- **Local Government (Records) Act 1962**
- **Manorial Document Rules 1959 (amended 1963 and 1967)**
- **Public Records Acts 1958 & 1967**
- **Local Government Act 1972**
- **Parochial Registers and Records Measure 1978**
- **Freedom of Information Act 2000**
- **General Data Protection Regulations (Data Protection Act) 2018**
- **Environmental Information Regulations 2005**
- **BS4971:2017 Conservation and Care of Archive and Library Collections**

**Schedule 2**  
**The Services of the Joint Archive Service**

- **Provision of strategic advice, planning and policy to the parties in respect of archives and records, their acquisition, preservation, terms of access and any statutory provisions that might apply. To develop and shape the JAS so that it continues to preserve archives and provide access in the widest possible sense by the most efficient means possible.**
- **Acquisition (in accordance with approved Collecting Policy and Terms of Deposit – see website)**
- **Preservation and conservation of physical records**
- **Routine repair and maintenance of Dorset History Centre and liaison with Dorset Property over more substantial works and upgrades. The building is managed by JAS staff outside of the core corporate property portfolio.**
- **Digital preservation**
- **With the Records Management Service(s), effective safeguarding of the parties' corporate memories**
- **Advice to the owners and depositors of archives**
- **Accessioning and cataloguing of archives**
- **On-site access to archives at Dorset History Centre**
- **Digital access via online catalogue, websites and social media**
- **Public engagement through outreach, education and community partnerships**
- **Digitisation**
- **Project delivery through external funding, collaboration and partnership**



### Schedule 3

#### Staffing establishment – functions delivered by the Joint Archive Service

The JAS should maintain an establishment commensurate with its role and functions, the size of its collections and the communities it serves. In broad terms, this should consist of a mixture of professional and paraprofessional roles and will include resourcing to cover the following areas:

##### Professional

- Management (strategic)
- Management (operational)
- Archives (physical collections)
- Archives (digital)
- Public Services including communications
- Community and public engagement
- Conservation

##### Para-professional

- Site support and caretaking
- Financial and administrative support
- Digitisation
- Collections care – physical and digital
- Public service support
- Customer Access Point – Reception and Business Support

**Schedule 4  
Finance and Cost Share**

1. **The Costs of the Services in each financial year shall be calculated and apportioned between the parties in accordance with the provisions of this Schedule.**
2. **The parties shall pay a contribution towards the Cost of the Services in proportion to the population base as determined by the Registrar-General's (ONS) most recent published mid-year figures prior to the start of the relevant financial year.**

**For the purposes of this Schedule the 'Costs of the Services' shall mean the total estimated annual cost of the following:**

- **Proper and reasonable expenditure incurred in relation to the Services**
  - **Central Support Services as required including, but not limited to Accountancy, Audit, Payroll HR & OD, Legal, IT and Property.**
  - **The premises occupied by the Services and running costs, repairs and maintenance**
  - **Employment of the staff including all costs or payments of whatever nature arising out of the termination of their employment by DC**
  - **Stationery and other consumables, transport and such other proper and reasonable expenditure of a variable nature which may occur from time to time for the proper provision of the Services.**
3. **BCP, upon receipt of an invoice shall pay to DC's nominated accountancy officer in each year, the amount of their contribution to the Cost of the Services in a single payment.**
  4. **In the event of contributions not being approved by the parties before the commencement of the financial year or any dispute or difference regarding the apportioned contributions, each party shall make a payment pending the resolution of the dispute by agreement between the parties or arbitration in accordance with clause XXX.**
  5. **The JAS may hold relatively moderate financial reserves in order to manage ongoing pieces of work or to pay one-off expenses. The Joint Archives Board will perform its role in monitoring and reviewing budget and may recommend the use of reserves. The level (amount) of reserves and decision on the budget out-turn and commitment or prediction of any underspend or overspend of JAS budget will be determined by 151 officers through the ongoing / usual budget monitoring process and report clearance prior to JAB meetings.**
  6. **All proper and reasonable costs of incidental to the decommissioning of the Services upon the expiry of this Agreement shall be apportioned between the parties pro rata and in proportion to the population base of each authority as per the most recent ONS figures.**

**Capital costs**

7. **DC holds sole and undivided title to the Dorset History Centre building, its fixtures and fittings. DC will therefore be responsible for furnishing capital funding to provide for any future extension or alteration to the DHC estate whether that relates to archive storage or to public or staff facilities. DC will discuss any proposed changes with BCP and will ensure that there is full transparency over costs and any consequential implication there might be for the future revenue funding for the service. Capital programmes will be presented to the Joint Archive Board for information, engagement and support for recommendation prior to progressing to Dorset Council Overview Committee and or Cabinet.**

8. **Any costs incurred by DC as the host authority related to interest payments resulting from prudential borrowing undertaken to fund capital improvements to the DHC building will be apportioned pro rata to population.**
9. **Capital costs for other service-related items such as equipment; technology; hardware and software would be treated as shared costs, apportioned pro rata to population, and processed via a business case decision taken through the Joint Archives Board for recommendation to each council if required.**

DRAFT

**Schedule 5**  
**Governance Arrangements for Joint Archive Service**

**Joint Archives Board (JAB)**

**Overall purpose and objectives**

The JAB is an executive body of members and officers drawn from both funding councils. It will:

- Act as the principal governing and oversight body for the JAS and the forum in which both councils can articulate their views and preferences on the service and its activities, its strategic direction and the JAS's relationship to services within each council and with external partners.
- Oversee with the activities of the JAS's business, consider and approve business plans, service plans, policies, procedures and an annual budget. that have been recommended.
- Monitor the operating and financial performance of the JAS, prioritise and allocate investment and resources, consider future development, workforce development and manage any audit recommendations and the risk profile of the JAS.
- Provide support and guidance to the JAS in relation to the strategic priorities of both councils and how the service can support and add value.
- Advocate for the JAS within each council respectively, to draw attention to its activities and achievements.

**Authority of the Joint Archive Board**

1. The JAB is mandated to govern the JAS through the adoption by both councils (via Cabinet approval) of the Joint Archives Agreement, 2022. Decisions taken by the JAB are delegated to respective portfolio holders. Where necessary, decisions can be referred to each council's Cabinet for formal endorsement.
2. The JAB does not vote on resolutions but instead works to identify the best solution for the service.
3. The JAB shall have delegated authority to oversee and govern the JAS and the full range of its activities in keeping with the terms and parameters detailed in the Joint Archives Agreement (2022).

**Membership**

4. Roles correct as at date of agreement. Titles and responsibilities may change over time but the Councils will endeavour to nominate officers of equivalent seniority and general remit for any future configuration of this body

**Elected Members: (voting)**

5. The JAB shall consist of 6 members including both Cabinet Portfolio Holders responsible for the relevant service area and two other elected councillor appointed by each Council. Portfolio holders as at May 2022 are:
  - Portfolio Holder: Customer and Communities for Dorset Council (or equivalent)
  - Portfolio Holder: Culture and Vibrant Places for BCP Council (or equivalent)
6. Each Council may appoint a substitute.
7. Each Council may remove its appointed elected members and appoint different members by giving written notice to host authority (Dorset Council) Democratic Services.
8. Each member of the JAB shall have one vote. Decisions shall be made by simple majority vote.

## 8.1 A decision is only made if there are three 'yes' votes

### Officers: (non-voting)

The JAB officer membership shall consist of Officers as appropriate or equivalent substitute:

- Appropriate Executive Director or Director (Dorset Council)
  - Appropriate Director (Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council)
  - Appropriate Head of Service (Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council)
  - Appropriate Head of Service (Dorset Council)
  - Service manager for Archives and Records (Dorset & Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Councils)
  - Chairman of Dorset Archives Trust (invited as observer)
9. The JAB may co-opt any other person whom it thinks appropriate to be a non-voting member of the Board / Joint Committee to advise, support or report to as and when required in order to support the business and transformational activities of the Joint Archive Service.

### Chair of the JAB

10. The role of chairman shall alternate biennially between the relevant Portfolio Holder of BCP and Dorset Councils.

### Quorum

11. The quorum for a meeting of the JAB shall be one member representative from each of the two Councils.

### Proceedings: Time and place of meetings

12. The JAB will meet, as required, which is expected to be three meetings per year with a minimum of two meetings a year in person, hybrid or virtually as appropriate.
13. Additionally, the Chair, may call for additional meetings when considered appropriate.
14. Meetings may be held in either DC or BCP accommodation alternately or at the Chair's discretion via MS Teams.
15. Meetings will be held in public unless exempt business is under consideration.

### Terms of Reference for Joint Archives Board

16. Through scrutiny, advice and challenge the board is responsible for overseeing the work of JAS and is responsible for advising and approving strategic and financial planning decisions in respect of the service subject to each authority's overall corporate budget and policy setting requirements.

The JAB is responsible for making the following decisions:

- agreeing policies for the service in accordance with national and local guidelines;
- which bids and programmes the JAS will become involved with
- determining future strategy
- approve audit reports, recommendations and actions

- **Adopt appropriate accreditation schemes and assure legal compliance of the service**

**The JAB is responsible for approving the following:**

- **Final form bid submissions created by the service**
- **JAS five year service plan**

**The JAB shall make recommendations to the two participating Councils on:**

- **the JAS budgets, optimisation and management of reserves, resources and future investments for service development**

**The JAB is responsible for monitoring:**

- **the effective operation of the Joint Archive Service within the available budget;**
- **operational, transformation / project and financial performance of the business**
- **identification and management of risk**

#### **Reporting**

17. **Decisions made by the board will be noted in the form of minutes with actions, notes and decision records created and circulated after the meeting by Democratic Services.**

#### **Resources**

18. **The JAB will be supported by DC's Democratic Services**
19. **Meeting agenda and papers including the minutes of previous meetings will be circulated at least one week prior to meetings and will be published on Dorset Council's website unless they contain exempt material.**
20. **Meetings will be set in advance and will be amended if business requires urgent attention.**

#### **Escalation**

21. **In the event that the JAB is unable to agree a position on a matter of JAS business, the issue at hand will be escalated via Portfolio holders of both councils to their respective Cabinets for a decision and then to arbitration via the two leaders.**

#### **Review**

22. **The Terms of Reference for the JAB will be reviewed every two years with a potential for amendments to be introduced by one or other of the councils at meetings of the Joint Archive Board. Dorset Council will administer any changes through its Democratic Services and will ensure version control.**

## Schedule 6 Archive Assets

### Archives and Archive Collections

#### Integrity of Archives or Archive Collections

1. No Archive or Archive Collection should be divided. An Archive is an accumulation of records, however large or small, with a single provenance and can vary in size from a single document to several hundred thousand items.

#### Ownership of Archives or Archive Collections

2. The ownership of Archives or Archive Collections created by the two parties or their predecessor bodies (prior to 2019) sits with either BCP or DC respectively.
3. Archives or Archive Collections, both hard copy and digital are held and will continue to be acquired via deposit, donation or purchase. The majority of these records are held in the custody of the JAS on behalf of individuals or organisations outside the two parties. These comprise:
  - Archives or Archive Collections deposited with the JAS before 1 April 2019 or subsequently deposited.
  - Archives or Archive Collections donated or deposited on indefinite loan with DC acting as host council for the JAS but under various statutory provisions (e.g. Public Records, Manorial Records, Tithe Records, Church of England Records).

#### Record-keeping

4. A register of all accessions of Archives or Archive Collections is, and will be, maintained by the JAS. This records the general content of each accession, a unique numerical identifier, a reference and the terms on which the material was acquired. Other metadata relating to formats, copyright etc will also be recorded where appropriate.

#### On termination of this Agreement

5. In the event of a disaggregation of the JAS, Archives or Archive Collections and all intellectual property therein pertaining primarily to either BCP or DC administrative areas (respectively) whether acquired by donation, on deposit or by purchase would devolve to responsibility of each party respectively. Arrangements relating to Archives or Archive Collections held under the terms of legislation or statutory provision or inspection (e.g. Public Records) would require to be approved by or on behalf of the relevant authorities.
6. Upon any future disaggregation of the JAS, the disposition and access terms relating to Archives or Archive Collections that are county-wide in nature (e.g. Coroner) would need to be agreed between the parties or their successor bodies.
7. All catalogue information relating to Archives or Archive Collections will be shared openly with both parties.

**Schedule 7  
Data Protection**

**Part 1 – Data Processing Terms**

**1. Definitions**

For the purposes of this Agreement, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

- 1.1. Data Protection Legislation:** all applicable data protection and privacy legislation in force from time to time in the UK including the UK GDPR; the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) (and regulations made thereunder) and the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/2426) as amended and all other legislation and regulatory requirements in force from time to time which apply to a party relating to the use of personal data (including, without limitation, the privacy of electronic communications) and the guidance and codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner or other relevant regulatory authority and applicable to a party;
- 1.2. Data Protection Impact Assessment:** an assessment by the Controller of the impact of the envisaged processing on the protection of Personal Data;
- 1.3. Controller, Processor, Data Subject, Personal Data, Personal Data Breach, Data Protection Officer** have the meaning given in the Data Protection Legislation;
- 1.4. Data Loss Event:** any event that results, or may result, in unauthorised access to Personal Data held by the Processor under this Agreement, and/or actual or potential loss and/or destruction of Personal Data in breach of this Agreement, including any Personal Data Breach;
- 1.5. Data Subject Request:** a request made by, or on behalf of, a Data Subject in accordance with rights granted pursuant to the Data Protection Legislation to access their Personal Data;
- 1.6. DPA 2018:** Data Protection Act 2018;
- 1.7. EU GDPR:** the General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679);
- 1.8. Processor Personnel** means all directors, officers, employees, agents, consultants and contractors of the Processors and/or of any Sub-Processor engaged in the performance of its obligations under this Agreement;
- 1.9. Protective Measures:** appropriate technical and organisational measures which may include: pseudonymising and encrypting Personal Data, ensuring confidentiality, integrity, availability and resilience of systems and services, ensuring that availability of and access to Personal Data can be restored in a timely manner after an incident, and regularly assessing and evaluating the effectiveness of the such measures adopted by it;
- 1.10. Sub-processor:** any third party appointed to process Personal Data on behalf of that Processor related to this Agreement.
- 1.11. UK GDPR:** has the meaning given to it in section 3(10) (as supplemented by section 205(4)) of the Data Protection Act 2018.

**2. Data Protection**



- 2.1. Both Parties will comply with all applicable requirements of the Data Protection Legislation. Clauses 2.1 to 2.14 inclusive apply to the Processing of Personal Data and is in addition to, and does not relieve, remove or replace, a Party's obligations or rights under the Data Protection Legislation.**
- 2.2. The Parties acknowledge that for the purposes of the Data Protection Legislation, BCP is the Controller and DC is the Processor. The only processing that the Processor is authorised to do is listed in Part 2 of this Schedule by the Controller and may not be determined by the Processor.**
- 2.3. The Processor shall notify the Controller immediately if it considers that any of the Controller's instructions infringe the Data Protection Legislation.**
- 2.4. The Processor shall provide all reasonable assistance to the Controller in the preparation of any Data Protection Impact Assessment prior to commencing any processing. Such assistance may, at the discretion of the Controller, include:**
  - 2.4.1. a systematic description of the envisaged processing operations and the purpose of the processing;**
  - 2.4.2. an assessment of the necessity and proportionality of the processing operations in relation to the Services;**
  - 2.4.3. an assessment of the risks to the rights and freedoms of Data Subjects; and**
  - 2.4.4. the measures envisaged to address the risks, including safeguards, security measures and mechanisms to ensure the protection of Personal Data.**
- 2.5. The Processor shall, in relation to any Personal Data processed in connection with its obligations under this Agreement:**
  - 2.5.1. process that Personal Data only in accordance with Part 2 of this Schedule, unless the Processor is required to do otherwise by law. If it is so required, the Processor shall promptly notify the Controller before processing the Personal Data unless prohibited by law;**
  - 2.5.2. ensure that it has in place Protective Measures, which are appropriate to protect against a Data Loss Event, which the Controller may reasonably reject (but failure to reject shall not amount to approval by the Controller of the adequacy of the Protective Measures) having taken account of the:**
    - 2.5.2.1. nature of the data to be protected;**
    - 2.5.2.2. harm that might result from a Data Loss Event;**
    - 2.5.2.3. state of technological development; and**
    - 2.5.2.4. cost of implementing any measures;**
  - 2.5.3. ensure that:**
    - 2.5.3.1. the Processor Personnel do not process Personal Data except in accordance with this Agreement (and in particular Part 2 of this Schedule);**
      - 2.5.3.1.1. it takes all reasonable steps to ensure the reliability and integrity of any Processor Personnel who have access to the Personal Data and ensure that they:**
        - 2.5.3.1.2. are aware of and comply with the Processor's duties under this clause;**
        - 2.5.3.1.3. are subject to appropriate confidentiality undertakings with the Processor or any Sub-processor;**
        - 2.5.3.1.4. are informed of the confidential nature of the Personal Data and do not publish, disclose or divulge any of the Personal Data to any third Party unless directed in writing to do so by the Controller or**
          - 2.5.3.1.5. as otherwise permitted by this Agreement; and**
          - 2.5.3.1.6. have undergone adequate training in the use, care, protection and handling of Personal Data; and**
  - 2.5.4. not transfer Personal Data outside of the UK unless the prior written consent of the Controller has been obtained and the following conditions are fulfilled:**

- 2.5.4.1. the Controller or the Processor has provided appropriate safeguards in relation to the transfer (in accordance with Part 3 of the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR) as determined by the Controller;
  - 2.5.4.2. the Data Subject has enforceable rights and effective legal remedies;
  - 2.5.4.3. the Processor complies with its obligations under the Data Protection Legislation by providing an adequate level of protection to any Personal Data that is transferred (or, if it is not so bound, uses its best endeavours to assist the Controller in meeting its obligations); and
  - 2.5.4.4. the Processor complies with any reasonable instructions notified to it in advance by the Controller with respect to the processing of the Personal Data;
  - 2.5.5. at the written direction of the Controller, delete or return Personal Data (and any copies of it) to the Controller on termination of the Agreement unless the Processor is required by law to retain the Personal Data.
- 2.6. Subject to Clause 2.7, the Processor shall notify the Controller immediately if it:
- 2.6.1. receives a Data Subject Request (or purported Data Subject Request);
  - 2.6.2. receives a request to rectify or erase any Personal Data;
  - 2.6.3. receives any other request, complaint or communication relating to either Party's obligations under the Data Protection Legislation;
  - 2.6.4. receives any communication from the Information Commissioner or any other regulatory authority in connection with Personal Data processed under this Agreement;
  - 2.6.5. receives a request from any third party for disclosure of Personal Data where compliance with such request is required or purported to be required by law; or
  - 2.6.6. becomes aware of a Data Loss Event.
- 2.7. The Processor's obligation to notify under Clause 2.6 shall include the provision of further information to the Controller in phases, as details become available.
- 2.8. The Processor shall maintain complete and accurate records and information to demonstrate its compliance with this Clause in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Legislation and allow for audits by the Controller or the Controller's designated auditor
- 2.9. Before allowing any Sub-processor to process any Personal Data related to this Agreement, the Processor must:
- 2.9.1. notify the Controller in writing of the intended Sub-processor and processing;
  - 2.9.2. obtain the written consent of the Controller;
  - 2.9.3. enter into a written agreement with the Sub-processor which gives effect to the terms set out in this Clause such that they apply to the Sub-processor; and
  - 2.9.4. provide the Controller with such information regarding the Sub-processor as the Controller may reasonably require.
- 2.10. The Processor shall remain fully liable for all acts or omissions of any of its Sub-processors.
- 2.11. The Parties agree to take account of any guidance issued by the Information Commissioner's Office. The Controller may on not less than 30 Working Days' notice instruct the Processor to amend this Agreement to ensure that it complies with any guidance issued by the Information Commissioner's Office.

**Part 2 Data Processing Table**

Description	Guidance	BCP Instructions
-------------	----------	------------------

Subject matter of the processing	<i>This should be a high level, short description of what the processing is about e.g. employees, service users</i>	DC shall process Personal Data which forms part of the Archive Assets maintained by the Service.  DC shall collect and process data relating to individuals depositing items.
Duration of the processing	<i>For example, for the duration of the contract including any extension or in accordance with instructions from the Council</i>	For the Term of this Agreement.
Nature and purposes of the processing	<i>Please be as specific as possible, but make sure that you cover all intended purposes.  The nature of the processing means any operation such as collection, recording, organisation, structuring, storage, adaptation or alteration, retrieval, consultation, use, disclosure by transmission, dissemination or otherwise making available, alignment or combination, restriction, erasure or destruction of data (whether or not by automated means) etc.  The purpose might include: employment processing, statutory obligation, recruitment assessment etc</i>	DC shall record and manage Personal Data to the extent it forms part of the Archive Assets entrusted to it or to the extent it is collected in respect of individuals donating or depositing items to become part of the Archive Assets.
Type of Personal Data	<i>For example, name, address, date of birth, NI number, contact details, pay, images, job status biometric data etc</i>	Most commonly name, address, contact details, date of birth. Other data may be collected in exceptional circumstances.
Categories of Data Subject	<i>For example, Service Users, Staff (including volunteers), students / pupils, members of the public, users of a particular website etc.</i>	Data Subjects may be any individuals who were resident in Dorset or connected to Dorset in a way to have their details within the Archive Assets.
Plan for return and destruction of the data once the processing is complete UNLESS requirement under union or member state law to preserve that type of data	<i>Describe how long the data will be retained for, how it will be returned or destroyed</i>	<i>Details of donors relating to archive collections returning to BCP upon disaggregation would be supplied with the material to which they relate.</i>

This page is intentionally left blank

## Cabinet

17 May 2022

## Minimum Income Guarantees in Charges for Adult Social Care and Support

### For Decision

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr P Wharf, Adult Social Care and Health

**Local Councillor(s):** All

**Executive Director:** V Broadhurst, Executive Director of People - Adults

Report Author: Michael Ford  
Title: Policy and Project Manager  
Tel: 01305 224964  
Email: Michael.ford@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

**Report Status:** Public

### Brief Summary:

Any person receiving local authority-arranged adult social care and support outside a care home needs to retain a certain level of income to cover their living costs. Under the Care Act 2014, charges for care and support must not reduce a person's income below a certain amount. This is a weekly amount, it varies according to the person's age and circumstances, and it is known as the Minimum Income Guarantee or 'MIG'. A local authority must allow people the relevant minimum, but it can decide to allow people to keep more of their income if it wishes.

The MIG applies to settings other than care homes, for example it applies to a person who is receiving care in their own home. It is intended to cover food; clothes; utility bills; contents insurance and other personal expenses. The MIG is not for housing costs such as mortgage costs; rent; council tax; or buildings insurance. Those costs are addressed directly in the person's individual financial assessment.

Dorset Council has until now routinely adopted the national MIG rates that the Department of Health and Social Care (DH&SC) publishes annually in a Circular to all local authorities. Until 2022-23, these Government rates had not increased for five years, with

the result that the real value of the MIG was eroded by price inflation. However, on 28 February 2022 the DH&SC confirmed in a Circular that the national MIG rates would be uplifted by 3%, in line with inflation.

This review considers whether the uplifted national rates are sufficient in Dorset, or whether they should be higher. The review began in October 2021, by looking at whether the national MIG rates for 2021-22 were sufficient in Dorset.

The review and setting of the MIG and PEA in future years will form an explicit and transparent part of the Council's annual budget setting process. An adult social care fees and charging report will be produced to detail all the forecast income and expenditure associated with the Directorate's services.

### **Recommendations:**

The Cabinet is asked to agree that:

- (i) the Dorset Minimum Income Guarantees (MIG) for financial year 2022/23 should be set at the DH&SC MIG rates, which have been uplifted by 3%.
- (ii) the approach to the review in Dorset, (which began in October 2021) involved first establishing that the MIG rates for 2021-22 were sufficiently robust.
- (iii) Dorset Council should not set a maximum percentage of a person's disposable income (over and above the guaranteed MIG) which may be considered in charging during 2022-23.
- (iv) Dorset Council should not set a maximum charge for receiving care outside a care home during 2022-23.
- (v) both formal complaints and informal appeals concerning the MIG should be recorded and reported in a way that gives us ongoing feedback about whether the MIG rates we have set have are sufficient.
- (vi) The Dorset MIG rates should be increased whenever the DH&SC rates increase, with any unplanned mid-year increases being funded by efficiencies within the Adult Social Care directorate. Accepting that there is a financial risk to the Council
- (vii) the approach to setting the Dorset Council Personal Expenses Allowance (PEA), (which applies to residents and temporary residents in residential care) should follow the approach to setting the MIG in future, to offer consistency between care settings.

- (viii) Adult Social Care should recommend considering further increases to the MIG and PEA levels as part of setting the Council's 2023-24 budget, and annually thereafter as part of setting future budgets.
- (ix) Dorset Council may wish to consider the impact of the MIG and PEA in any wider suite of measures it identifies for alleviating increases in the cost of living that all residents have experienced, and particularly those who are receiving care and support.

**Reason for Recommendations:**

The reason for the recommendations is to achieve transparency and more explicitly meet the expectations of the Department of Health and Social Care's [Care and support statutory guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) - particularly paragraphs 8.42–8.48 and Annex C paragraphs 48) - 50).

## 1.0 Background to the Review.

- 1.1 The Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) comprises a set of rates which vary according to the age and the circumstances of the person. Although the term 'MIG' is not widely known or used, it is a very important part of a complex calculation which ultimately determines how much money a person has left to meet their daily living costs after the Council has taken charges towards the cost of their care.
- 1.2 Another part of that complex calculation arises where a person receives welfare benefits to meet disability needs that are outside the eligibility criteria for adult social care and support. In those cases, our charging arrangements are required by the Care Act 2014 to ensure that the person keeps enough money to cover their disability-related expenditure. For example, the additional costs of bedding because of incontinence, or higher heating costs because of limited mobility.
- 1.3 Since the Care Act 2014 passed into law, the Council has routinely adopted the MIG rates which are set out by the DH&SC in a Local Authority Circular each year. The most recent Circular is [Charging for care and support: local authority circular - LAC\(DHSC\)\(2022\)1 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) National information is that most local authorities also adopt the national MIG rates.
- 1.4 In December 2020, a Claimant ("SH"), acting through her mother and litigation friend, sought a Judicial Review of the decision by Norfolk County Council to change the basis on which it calculated the charges made to her for the care it provided. The change had substantially increased SH's charges. SH claimed that Norfolk's decision indirectly discriminated against her as a severely disabled person, and in breach of her rights under the Human Rights Act 1998, the European Convention on Human Rights, and the Equality Act 2010. The Claimant's claim was successful, and Mr Justice Griffiths granted relief to SH. [SH, R \(On the Application Of\) v Norfolk County Council & Anor \(Rev 1\) \[2020\] EWHC 3436 \(Admin\) \(18 December 2020\) \(bailii.org\)](#)
- 1.5 The Judicial Review related only to Norfolk County Council's charging policy and did not create a legal precedent that other Councils are obliged to follow. However, the ensuing discussion in the care sector about whether or not the ruling was sound, or might have possible wider implications beyond Norfolk, did bring a welcome focus to several areas:
  - a) The law itself relating to the treatment of income in charging. People who receive income from welfare benefits may have to contribute part of it towards the costs of their care, whereas by law people with care needs



who are receiving earnings from paid employment must be allowed to keep all of it.

- b) The calculation of disability-related expenditure described in paragraph 1.2.
  - c) The Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG).
- 1.6 This review directly addresses area c) The MIG - and also its counterpart rate for people who are in residential care, which is called the Personal Expenses Allowance (PEA). The report only considers our disability-related expenditure policy to the extent that it works alongside the MIG to ensure that the person is left with sufficient income.
- 1.5 The PEA applies to people who are receiving care and support in a care home only. The statutory guidance says that the local authority must leave the person with a minimum amount of income. This is known as the PEA and the amount is set out in Regulations and sent via a Local Authority Circular and it is binding. Any income above the PEA may be taken into account by the Council in determining charges.
- 1.7 The purpose of the PEA is to ensure that the person in residential care has some money to spend as they wish. For example, on stationery, personal toiletries, treats and small presents for friends and relatives. It must not be used to cover any aspect of the person's care and support that the Council has arranged to meet the person's eligible needs.
- 1.8 Finally, the review considers whether Dorset should:
- (i) set a maximum percentage of a person's disposable income (over and above the MIG) which may be considered in charging. For example, we might adopt a policy that would leave a person with the relevant MIG or with 20% of their income – whichever is the higher amount.
  - (ii) set a maximum charge for receiving care outside a care home. For example, we might adopt a policy that we would not charge a person more than 80% of the usual cost of care in a care home, for the care that they are receiving at home. A policy like that could help ensure that people are encouraged to remain in in their own homes, promoting individual wellbeing and independence.

- 1.10 The review was carried out by the Head of Service, the Principal Social Worker, The Policy Manager, and the Financial Assessments Team Manager and Financial Support Manager.

## **2.0 Evidence considered in the review.**

- 2.1 The review began in October 2021. The approach taken was to evaluate the evidence where it was available, and where it was not available to take steps make sure it will be available for future reviews. There are several strands of evidence:

**a) The impact on the MIG of our post-Care Act 2014 financial assessment and charging policy.**

- 2.2 In order to see how the MIG has changed over time, the review compared the current MIG, with the MIG under the pre-Care Act 2014 charging regime. The results of this review were that there were sound decision making in both cases of Dorset County Council adopted the national MIG rates set by the Government, rather than applying a local Dorset rate.

- 2.3 The review also noted that the MIG rates in the pre-Care Act 2014 policy, although more generous, were set somewhat arbitrarily by comparison to our current policy, which places individual disability-related expenditure at the heart of the calculation of what a person is assessed as being able to afford to contribute towards the cost of their care. It was therefore not possible to make a direct and fair financial comparison between the pre-Care Act policy and the current policy.

**b) Our Disability-Related Expenditure (DRE) policy.**

- 2.4 The application of the Council's DRE policy is personalised and individual and it is designed to shelter the person from having to use their disposable income to meet their disability-related needs. The review noted that the proper application of the DRE policy is critical, as it works in conjunction with the MIG to ensure that the person retains 'sufficient funds'.

- 2.5 The meeting considered two recent cases where the Council had been willing to reassess, and increase, the amount of DRE awarded to a person, following an appeal. The review noted that our willingness to reassess on appeal is critical and should continue.

**c) Feedback from complaints.**

- 2.6 In Dorset, complaints are not the same as appeals. The review considered the complaints recorded in a quarterly report provided by the Senior Assurance Officer in Complaints. In quarter 4 of 2020-21, complaints to the Council about financial matters comprised 14 of the 34 complaints that were considered through the formal complaints process. Complaints are not currently formally recorded or analysed in a way that allows us to see whether the MIG is specifically referred to. Recommendation (v) addresses this point.
- 2.7 The review team therefore spoke directly with the manager in People Directorate – Adults & Housing who investigates the complaints. The manager recollected that there had been approximately 6 complaints that specifically referred to the MIG in the 19 years since 2003. Of those complaints, 2 had been received since the Norfolk County Council Judicial Review raised the profile of the MIG. A recommendation has been made to make sure that formal complaints and informal appeals provide useful feedback about whether we are setting the MIG at a sufficient rate.
- 2.8 A look back at recent complaints to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman shows that since 1 April 2019, when Dorset Council was vested, there have been 2 Ombudsman decisions that referred to the MIG. (Decisions 19 005 009 and 19 019 462). However, the references were by way of giving contextual background in both cases – and the MIG was not the focus of the complaints or of the decisions.
- 2.9 The review therefore recognised that is generally less likely that we will find complaints framed around the insufficiency of the MIG and it is more likely that we will find complaints around the ‘affordability’ of contributions. The review therefore discussed our usual responses to complaints and appeals about affordability, which are ‘personalised’ responses: including our offer to make sure that the person is receiving all the welfare benefits they are entitled to; and our review of their individual DRE to make sure it was calculated correctly. As the cost of living rises, the Council is likely to receive more appeals and more complaints in this area.

**d) The cost of living in Dorset.**

- 2.10 The MIG is intended to cover food; clothes; utility bills; contents insurance and other personal expenses. (It is not for mortgage costs; rent; council tax; or buildings insurance). If the items that the MIG is intended to cover were more expensive in Dorset than in other regions, there would be at least a prima facie case for increasing the MIG.

2.11 Unfortunately, there appears to be very little reliable data available about regional non-housing related price differences available from the independent sources the review hoped to use, like the ONS. Our findings have been somewhat limited, but they are presented in the table as follows:

Item.	Is Dorset more expensive?
Food	'National pricing' is understood to be the norm among national retailers. <a href="#">Supermarkets are most likely</a> to vary their prices according to the amount of local competition.
Clothes	'National pricing' appears to be the norm.
Utility bills	We found some evidence that the <b>unit</b> cost and <b>fixed cost</b> of electricity is slightly more expensive in the southwest than <a href="#">average</a> , but we would need good data about relative <b>usage</b> (which may be lower as the southwest is mild) to know whether <b>overall costs</b> are likely to be higher or lower in Dorset for the person.
Personal expenses	Personal expenses are almost certainly a mixed picture and likely to be a different experience for different individuals receiving the MIG. It is likely that some personal expenses are higher in Dorset than elsewhere, and some lower.

2.12 The review concluded that based on the information it could gather, the average cost of living is not higher in Dorset than in other regions, in terms of the non-housing costs the MIG is intended to cover. In anticipation of rising energy prices, in future years, the review team will seek direct feedback from individuals subject to the MIG.

**e) The Council’s overall finances and budgetary position.**

2.13 The review considered the statement in paragraph 10.27 of the statutory guidance which says:

“In determining how to meet needs the local authority may take into reasonable consideration its own finances and budgetary position. This includes the importance of ensuring the funding available is sufficient to meet the needs of the whole population.”

2.14 The government announced the inflationary uplift in the MIG for 2022-23 on 7 September 2021 in [Build Back Better: Our Plan for Health and Social Care](#). The cost of this uplift to Dorset Council is circa £1m, provision was made for it in the Council’s budget setting process for 2022-23. Therefore, the financial implications

of the recommendations in this report are covered, but no further provision is available for an above-inflation uplift in 2022-23.

- 2.15 The alignment of the Dorset MIG to the national rate does present a financial risk to Dorset Council. Were an above-inflation increase to the MIG to be set nationally during 2022-23 then the additional cost of that uplift would have to be absorbed within existing Council budgets. This may require service efficiencies to be found elsewhere. This highlights the importance of Government providing sufficient funding to local Authorities to enable national policies to be implemented locally.

**f) The national policy direction.**

- 2.16 The review noted that In September 2021, 'Building back better', the Government's plan for health and social care' said: "At present, some people face real financial pressures each week or month after paying for their care. To allow people receiving means-tested support to keep more of their own income, the Government will unfreeze the Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) for those receiving care in their own homes and Personal Expenses Allowance (PEA) for care home residents, so that **from April 2022 they will both rise in line with inflation.**" (Emphasis added). This is the first increase in the MIG since 2016-17.

**g) The Personal Expenses Allowance (PEA).**

- 2.17 The PEA applies to people who are receiving care and support in a care home only. The statutory guidance says that the local authority must leave the person with a minimum amount of income. This amount is known as the PEA and the amount is set out in Regulations and sent via a Local Authority Circular and it is binding. Any income above the PEA may be considered by the Council in determining charges.
- 2.18 The PEA is not a welfare benefit; it is the amount of the person's own income that they **must** be left with after charges have been deducted. However, where a person has no income, the local authority is not responsible for providing one.
- 2.19 The purpose of the PEA is to ensure that the person in residential care has some money to spend as they wish. For example, on stationery, personal toiletries, treats and small presents for friends and relatives. It must not be used to cover any aspect of the person's care and support that the Council has arranged to meet the person's eligible needs.
- 2.20 Whereas councils are required to apply the DH&SC MIG rates, or their chosen higher rates, to every person in the relevant age band, the PEA is different, and councils may use their discretion to apply a higher PEA in individual cases. For

example, where the person needs to contribute towards the cost of maintaining their former home, or where the person has a dependent child. This review has not considered the exercise of discretion in individual cases.

- 2.21 Whilst people in residential care, usually need less disposable income, the review nevertheless recommends that the approach to setting the PEA should follow the approach to setting the MIG in future.

### **3.0 Maximum percentages and maximum charges.**

- 3.1 The Care Act statutory guidance says that councils should consider setting a maximum percentage of a person's disposable income (over and above the MIG) which may be considered in charging. For example, we might adopt a policy that would leave a person with the relevant MIG, or with 20% of their income – whichever is the higher amount.
- 3.2 The same guidance also says that councils should consider setting a maximum charge for receiving care outside a care home. For example, we might adopt a policy that we would not charge a person more than 80% of the 'usual cost of care' in a care home, for the care that they are receiving at home. A policy like that could help ensure that people are encouraged to remain in their own homes, promoting individual wellbeing and independence.
- 3.3 The review considered the case for maximum percentages and/or maximum charges and took into account the example of a London Borough Council (LBC) that sets a maximum charge. The amount the LBC sets is significantly in excess of all benefit entitlement figures. That approach seemed to favour people with more income, i.e. the wealthier, and it did not appear particularly equitable way of investing in care in Dorset.
- 3.4 Overall, the review did not identify any reasonable and equitable way of funding a maximum percentage or a maximum charge, other than by causing greater detriment to statutory care and support services elsewhere in the Directorate.

### **4.0 Conclusions.**

- 4.1 The review has considered the evidence available and made several recommendations about MIGs and PEAs for the financial year 2022-23. The review did not identify an overall case for raising the rates of the MIG and the PEA above those set by the DH&SC at this time. However, some of the evidence available was incomplete, and steps will be taken to build on it for future reviews,

which should be carried out in a similarly explicit and transparent way as part of the Council's annual budget-setting process.

## **5.0 Financial Implications.**

- 5.1 The government announced the inflationary uplift in the MIG for 2022-23 in [Build Back Better: Our Plan for Health and Social Care](#) on 7 September 2021. The cost of the uplift to Dorset Council is around £1m and provision was made for it in the Council's budget setting process for 2022-23. The financial implications of the recommendations in this report are therefore covered, but no further provision is available for an above-inflation uplift in 2022-23.
- 5.2 Were an additional uplift to be announced by the government mid-year in 2022-23, the cost of that uplift would have to be met through efficiencies in Council Directorates.
- 5.3 On 21 June 2022 the Cabinet will consider the Council's performance against its revenue budget in 2021-22 and the impact this has upon reserves, including the general fund.

## **6.0 Climate Implications.**

- 6.1 The climate implications that are associated with the MIG sit with the person and their individual expenditure choices.

## **7.0 Wellbeing and Health Implications.**

- 7.1 Government guidance makes clear that the purpose of the MIG is to promote independence and social inclusion and ensure that the person has sufficient funds to meet basic needs such as purchasing food, utility costs or insurance. This is an important component of the wellbeing principle set out in Section 1 of the Care Act 2014.

## **8.0 Other Implications.**

- 8.1 No other implications have been identified.

## **9.0 Risk Assessment.**

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

Current Risk: **Medium**

Residual Risk: **Medium**

The risk assessment will remain as **Medium** even after the inflationary uplift. This is because the cost of living for people is currently rising unpredictably. The number of appeals and complaints is also expected to rise.

## **10.0 Equalities Impact Assessment.**

10.1 The Government [MIG rates](#) vary according to the person's age, responsibilities for children, caring responsibilities, relationship status, and disability status.

## **11.0 Appendices.**

**Appendix A** - Extracts from ['Department of Health & Social Care Guidance: Social care - charging for care and support: local authority circular - LAC\(DHSC\) \(2022\)1.](#)

## **12.0 Background Papers.**

All background papers are hyperlinked.



### **Extracts from [‘Department of Health & Social Care Guidance: Social care - charging for care and support: local authority circular - LAC\(DHSC\) \(2022\)1.](#)**

#### **1. Summary**

The circular sets out that, for the financial year 2022 to 2023:

- the personal expenses allowance (PEA) for local authority-supported care home residents increases in line with inflation.
- the minimum income guarantee (MIG) for people receiving local authority-arranged care and support other than in a care home increases in line with inflation.

#### **4.2 Personal expenses allowance**

The PEA is the weekly amount that people receiving local authority-arranged care and support in a care home (residents) are assumed to need as a minimum for their personal expenses and local authorities must apply this.

It is intended to allow residents to have money for personal use. Based on a financial assessment of their resources, individuals must be left with the full value of their PEA. It is then up to them to determine how they spend it.

Local authorities, providers of accommodation, and residents are reminded that the PEA should not be spent on aspects of care and support that have been contracted for by the local authority and/or assessed as necessary to meet the person’s eligible care and support needs by the local authority or the NHS.

For the next financial year (2022 to 2023), the PEA will increase in line with inflation from its current level of £24.90 per week to £25.65 per week.

#### **4.3 Minimum income guarantee**

People receiving local authority-arranged care and support other than in a care home need to retain a certain level of income to cover their living costs. Under the Care Act 2014, charges must not reduce people’s income below a certain amount, but local authorities can allow people to keep more of their income if they wish. This is a weekly amount and is known as the MIG (minimum income guarantee).

For the next financial year (2022 to 2023), the rates of the MIG will increase in line with inflation as follows, where the adult concerned is:

- responsible for, and a member of, the same household as a child, the amount of £86.20 in respect of each child
- a single person and—
  - is aged 18 or older but less than 25, the amount of £74.60
  - is aged 25 or older but less than pension credit age, the amount of £94.15
  - has attained pension credit age, the amount of £194.70
- a lone parent aged 18 or over, the amount of £94.15
- a member of a couple and—
  - one or both are aged 18 or over, the amount of £73.95
  - one or both have attained pension credit age, the amount of £148.65
- a single person who is in receipt of, or the local authority considers would, if in receipt of income support, be in receipt of—
  - disability premium, the amount of the applicable premium is £41.55
  - enhanced disability premium, the amount of the applicable premium is £20.30
- a member of a couple and one member of that couple is in receipt of, or the local authority considers would, if in receipt of income support, be in receipt of—
  - disability premium, the amount of the applicable premium is £29.60
  - enhanced disability premium, the amount of the applicable premium is £14.60
- in receipt of, or the local authority considers would, if in receipt of income support be in receipt of, carer premium, the amount of the applicable premium is £44.55.

## Cabinet

17 May 2022

## Re-procurement of the Learning and Development Framework for Children's and Adults and Housing Services

### For Decision

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr A Parry, Children, Education, Skills and Early Help

**Local Councillor(s):** n/a

**Executive Director:** T Leavy, Executive Director of People - Children

**Report Author:** Tina Ironside  
**Title:** Strategic Commissioner  
**Tel:** 01305 228418  
**Email:** tina.ironside@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

**Report Status:** Public

### Brief Summary:

This purpose of this report is to request a decision from cabinet to approve a tender of framework contract for Learning and Development activities for Children's Services, the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership (PDSCP) and Adults and Housing Services. The current framework expires in March 2023

The framework will provide an approved list of training providers that can bid to deliver courses which meet our statutory requirements and ensures the workforce are skilled.

The new framework will be opened periodically to allow more providers to join, leading to healthy competition in the market, best value and a wider choice of quality provision. The framework will operate for 4 years, ending in March 2027.

### Recommendation:

The Cabinet is asked to consider the contents of this report in respect of the proposed framework and that Cabinet agree:

1. To commence the procurement process, award contracts and implement the framework as per timetable summarised in 1.4
2. The further step of making any framework award should be delegated to the Cllr Andrew Parry, as Portfolio Holder for People – Children’s, after consultation with Theresa Leavy, Executive Director People – Children’s.

**Reason for Recommendation:**

1. Cabinet is required to approve all key decisions with financial consequences of £500k or more
2. The current contractual arrangements will come to an end in March 2023.
3. To be compliant with procurement legalisation, to ensure best value and quality of training provision

**1. Report**

- 1.1 Adults and Housing Services and Children’s Services, including the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (PDSCP) are committed to:
  - delivering high quality services
  - embedding a learning culture where the workforce is motivated and continuously strives to improve so they can deliver better outcomes for the residents of Dorset
- 1.2 The council is committed to the provision of a comprehensive learning and development offer, which meets statutory requirements and supports achievement of the council’s People Strategy 2019-2024. It enables the workforce to utilise the opportunities emerging from new technologies and the latest academic theory to inform evidence-based practice.
- 1.3 The PDSCP is responsible for providing multi-agency safeguarding training which enables those working with children and their families to work effectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- 1.4 The current framework ends in March 2023, and so to enable sufficient time for tendering activity, contract award and implementation for an April 2023 start procurement activity needs to commence in June 2022. The timeline for implementation is provided in the table below:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
June 2022	Tender go live
August 2022	Tender Evaluation
Sept 2022	Contract Award
October 2022	Commence mini-competitions
April 2023	Commence delivery

- 1.5 The framework will provide an approved list of training providers that can bid to deliver courses which meet our statutory requirements and ensures the workforce are skilled.
- 1.6 Unlike the previous framework, the new framework will be opened periodically to allow more providers to join, leading to healthy competition in the market, securing best value and a wider choice of quality provision.
- 1.7 Having a shared procurement approach in both Directorates means that although we may commission different courses, we are using the same pool of providers, so there is continuity in our offer. When we do deliver similar topics, we can work together to procure. Below is feedback from a course commissioned jointly, showing the impact of this joined up approach on the delegate's thinking about practice in relation to whole family working:
  - a. "The training was very well presented and highlighted areas around whole family working is considered to ensure a holistic view is taken. It has provided a good source of information to draw upon when working across children and adult services"
  - b. "The training reinforced the importance of accurate information gathering from a range of services to inform the transition from children services to adult services"

## **2. What does this mean for our residents?**

- 2.1 Effective training supports our workforce to be able to meet the needs of residents in the most effective way, in line with best practice and latest evidence and ultimately results in residents and communities being better supported.
- 2.2 Securing the most appropriate trainer, including those with lived experience has a direct impact upon how officers work with individuals and communities to meet their needs. The feedback below is a common response from those who attend training:

- a. "I will be so much more mindful of the language that I use and the outcome of the response that I am hoping to receive by asking the correct type of question. I have also learnt how to be much more effective when listening to someone else's goal setting and the importance of them doing this, not me."
- 2.3 The Directorates identify learning from audits, reviews, research and feedback which informs the training programme ensuring it is focused on improving on the outcomes for residents. Learning interventions have included:
- practitioner events to learn from Safeguarding Practice Reviews
  - a suicide prevention learning event
  - launch of trans-awareness and inclusion training and resources
  - development of practitioner toolkits on a range of themes e.g., domestic abuse

### **3. Financial Implications**

- 3.1 Service budgets incorporate the funding requirements set out in this report. The anticipated maximum value of the contract award over 4 years is £2,176,820, which is £544,205 per annum.
- 3.2 The breakdown of budget allocation for 2022/23 is:
- a. Children's Services: £240,300
  - b. PDSCP: £60,000
  - c. Adults and Housing Services: £243,905

### **4. Climate Implications**

- 4.1 A procurement system which allows a broader range of providers to bid for opportunities should increase the number of local providers joining the framework.
- 4.2 Local provision is supportive of the environmental agenda as local providers will be travelling shorter distances than providers outside of the County to deliver training. This also supports the Councils 'buy local' agenda.
- 4.3 A broader pool also means that the Council will be encouraging a higher quality of virtual delivery as there will be greater competition. This will mean that some training can remain virtual outside of the restrictions the pandemic created, therefore reducing the environmental impact of people travelling to face to face delivery of training.

## **5. Well-being and Health Implications**

- 5.1 Ensuring that Council officers are safe and competent to practice supports the health and wellbeing of residents, as officers can provide the right support, advice and guidance at the right time in order to support people to live well.
- 5.2 A good training offer supports the wellbeing and health of staff as it supports staff to feel confident in their work which reduces stress and anxiety which can be detrimental to both physical and mental health.
- 5.3 It encourages staff to share experiences and learn from others which develops connections and sense of shared purpose which is positive for self-esteem and moral.
- 5.4 A good learning and development offer also demonstrates that the organisation values the workforce. These factors support wellbeing and health of individuals but also the health of the organisation through supporting staff retention.

## **6. Other Implications**

### **7. Risk Assessment**

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

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

### **8. Equalities Impact Assessment**

- 8.1 As this is a re-procurement of an existing framework that aims to increase the choice of training provision, it was concluded that an Equality Impact Assessment was not necessary.
- 8.2 The specification for this framework will include an equalities and diversity section, with requirements such as:
  - ensuring training is accessible and inclusive for everyone
  - case studies and examples used in training reflect diversity
  - training delivery is fully compliant with equality and diversity law and good practice

## **9. Appendices**

N/A

## **10. Background Papers**

[Dorset Council People Strategy 2019 to 2024](#)



## Cabinet

17 May 2022

### Aspire Adoption Statement of Purpose 1st of April 2022 to 2023 and Annual Report 1st April 2021 to 31st of March 2022

#### For Decision

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr A Parry, Children, Education, Skills and Early Help

**Local Councillor(s):**

**Executive Director:** T Leavy, Executive Director of People - Children

Report Author: Michelle Whiting

Title: Aspire Adoption Statement of Purpose and Annual Report

Tel: 0300 123 9868

Email: michelle.whiting@aspireadoption.co.uk

**Report Status:** Public

**Brief Summary:** Dorset Council has a duty under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 to establish and maintain an adoption service for its area.

Along with BCP Council, Dorset Council discharges this duty through a delegation of functions to Aspire Adoption, a Regional Adoption Agency. Dorset retains overall responsibility for its adoption and special guardianship services, continuing to have parental responsibility for its own Children in Care but most adoption and some special guardianship functions are delegated to Aspire Adoption.

The appended report is the fourth annual adoption report presented by Aspire Adoption, summarising the work of the agency in the period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021. It has been written to ensure and provides the Council with an opportunity to satisfy itself that the requirements of the Statutory Adoption Guidance 2013 and the Adoption Minimum Standards 2014 are met.

This report provides a summary of the comprehensive self-evaluation of Aspire Regional Adoption Agency

**Recommendation:** That the Aspire Adoption Annual Report and Statement of Purpose be received and noted.

**Reason for Recommendation:** That Cabinet is satisfied that the Aspire Statement of Purpose accurately describes the activities that the agency discharges on behalf of Dorset Council and the Annual Report satisfies the report that these activities were discharged to a high standard in the last year.

1. **Report**

1.1 Please see the reports attached

2. **Financial Implications**

Aspire Adoption Agency delivered services for the financial year 2021 to 2022 within the agreed budget. Aspire Executive Board will have access to the full financial report

3. **Climate Implications**

None

4. **Well-being and Health Implications**

None

5. **Other Implications**

None

6. **Risk Assessment**

6.1 **HAVING CONSIDERED:** the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as: LOW

Current Risk: LOW  
Residual Risk: LOW

7. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

The service promotes permanence for children through Special Guardianship and Adoption and services to support adopters and Special Guardians. It commissions an independent birth parent service.

The statement of purpose outlines the services commitment to dignity, equality and respect for all who come into contact with the service.

8. **Appendices**

Aspire Adoption Annual Report for Dorset Council – 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

Aspire Adoption 3-year Financial Model

Aspire Adoption – Statement of Purpose 2022 - 2023

9. **Background Papers**

Aspire Adoption Annual Report 2021 to 2022

Aspire Adoption Statement of Purpose 2022 to 2023

This page is intentionally left blank



# **Aspire Adoption Annual Report for Dorset Council**

**1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022**

## Contents

1. Introduction
2. Children's Adoption Data
3. Adopter Recruitment
4. National Mystery Shopper Exercise
5. Post Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Services
6. Adoption Panel
7. Birth Parent Services
8. Special Guardianship Assessment
9. Finance

## Appendices

1. Local authority statutory responsibilities in respect of adoption
2. Division of roles and responsibilities between Aspire and the local authorities
3. Aspire Organisational Structure and Staffing
4. Governance of Aspire Adoption
5. Adoption Panel
6. Aspire Adoption 3-year Financial Model

## 1. Introduction

1.1 This is the fifth annual report for Aspire Adoption Regional Adoption Agency (RAA). We are pleased to report that despite the continuing challenges of the pandemic, Aspire’s partnership with Dorset Childrens’ Services has continued to strengthen and grow. This was confirmed in the 2021 Ofsted inspectors who

“Were pleased with the working relationship between Dorset and Aspire and most importantly it led to good outcomes for children with almost every child with a plan of adoption being successfully placed with a family.”

1.2 Aspire improved the monthly performance reporting to give Dorset a clear view of every child in the adoption process. This was noted by Ofsted

“Senior managers, through regular oversight, assure themselves that children receive an effective service from the regional adoption agency”

## 2. Children’s Adoption Performance Data

### SBPA Decisions

	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Total
Dorset	2	4	3	2	11

### Placement Orders

	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Total
Dorset	4	4	0	3	11

### Placements

	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Total
Dorset	7	3	7	0	17

### Adoption Orders

	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Total
Dorset	5	4	5	0	14

### Children with PO waiting for a match

	Jun-30	Sep-30	Dec-31	Mar-31
Dorset	8	8	4	8

**Children with  
PO linked to  
adopters**

	Jun-30	Sep-30	Dec-31	Mar-31
Dorset	2	5	4	8

**Children with  
PO not yet  
linked**

	Jun-30	Sep-30	Dec-31	Mar-31
Dorset	6	3	0	0

2.1 Fewer children had a Local Authority Should Be Placed for Adoption ( SBPA) plan this year, which meant that there were fewer, placement orders and subsequent adoption orders made. This figure is slightly skewed by the Somerset ruling which meant that 4 children who most likely would have had an adoption order made by the 31<sup>st</sup> March had their adoptions postponed until after the 31<sup>st</sup> of March

Every child with a plan for adoption is linked to an adopter.

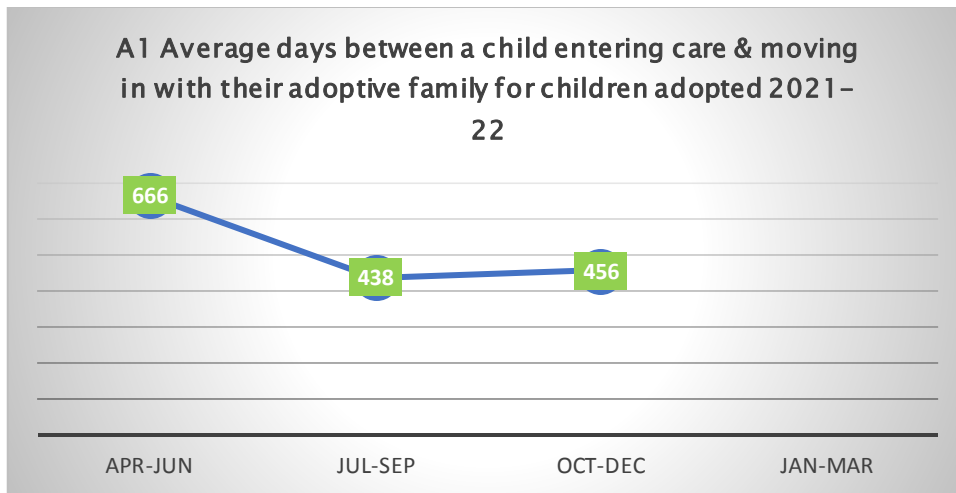
Aspire has worked hard to increase the range and diversity of adopters enabling children labelled the 'hardest to place' find loving adoptive families.

## **2.2 Timeliness of adoption**

**A1** The most up to date comparator figures available at the time of writing are the Coram BAAF quarter 3 figures to the 31<sup>st</sup> of December. The England average was 485 days and Dorset 456

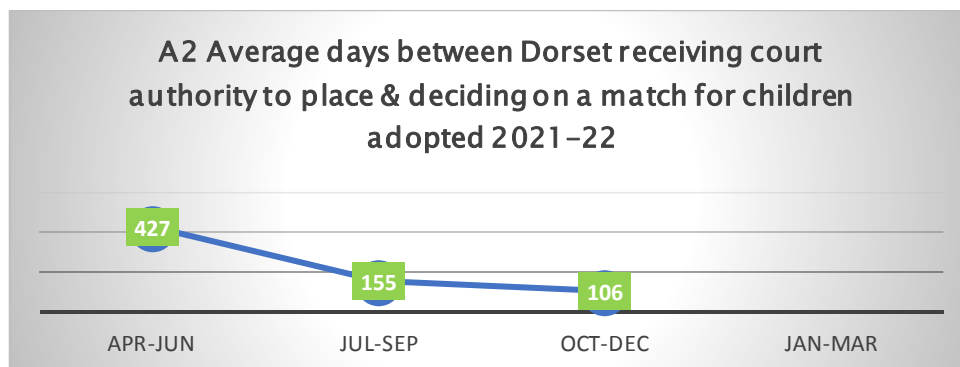
At the end of quarter 4 the Dorset average remained at 456 days





**A2** The most up to date comparator figures available at the time of writing are the Coram BAAF quarter 3 figures to the 31<sup>st</sup> of December. The England average was 196 days and Dorset 106 days

At the end of quarter 4 the Dorset average remained at 106 days



The quicker children are matched with adopters and placed the better. The performance figures illustrate Ofsted’s conclusion that

*“Adoption is considered carefully and promptly for all children who are unable to return home to their birth families and who need a permanent alternative.”  
Ofsted 2021*

### *Jakes Story*

*Jake was found eating off the floor, severely neglected. Aged 7 with autism, nonverbal and mobility issues the courts doubted we would find adopters. But there was something very engaging about Jake who loves swinging and sensory play.*

*His social workers and foster carers were all determined to find him his own family foster carers, social workers.*

*It took ambition, determination, and the ability to put together a great long term support package with education and health. Aspire found a very special family who love Jake to pieces. Jake is going from strength to strength.*

### 2.3 Early Permanence

EP	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Total
Dorset	2	2	1	5	10

Early Permanence is where children are placed with prospective adopters on a fostering basis. If the courts decide that adoption is the right plan, they become their adopters. This avoids the additional trauma children suffer from changes in their primary carers.

Early Permanence has generally been used for babies. Aspire has placed babies direct from hospital so there are Dorset children who have only known the one carer. We have also been far more creative in our use of Early Permanence with older children to reduce placement moves and breaking avoid delay.

Our adopters have proved that with the right support and information they can manage a high degree of risk, uncertainty, and contact. Two children ended up being returned to their birth families. They worked incredibly hard to make it a smooth transition for the child.

Over half of our adopters will consider Early Permanence

*Mica 11 months story*

Page 94

*Due to unforeseen circumstances her foster placement needed to end quickly. Dorset were exploring permanence with extended,*

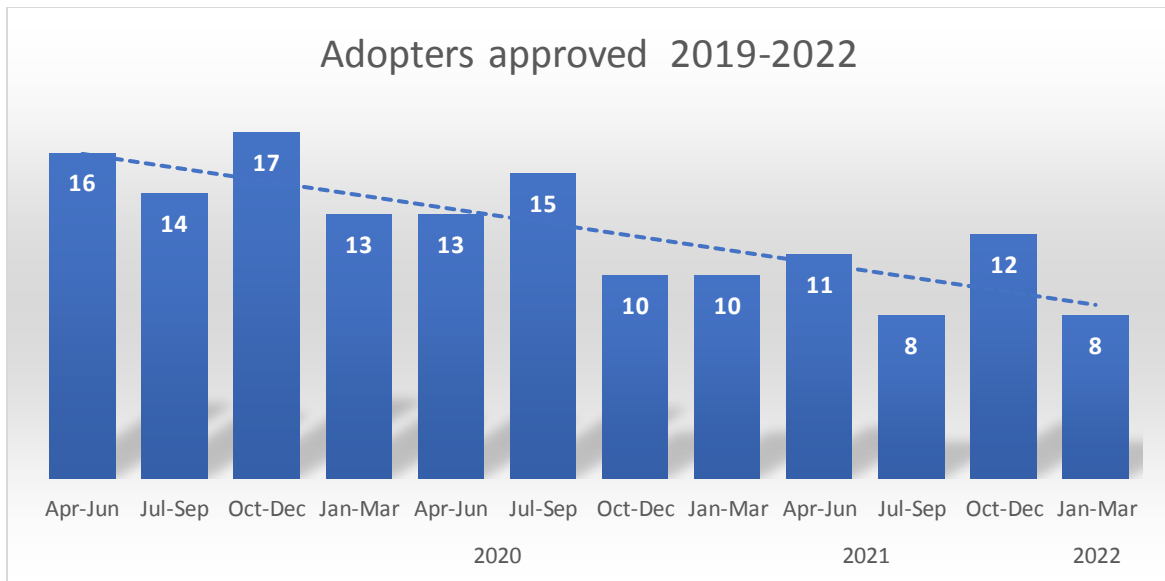
### **3. Adopter Recruitment**

3.1 Aspire recruits a great range of diverse adopters. At any one time, we try to have around 30 families available to meet the needs of Dorset and BCP children.

Subtle changes to our social media messaging and changes to the induction programme have helped attract adopters for older children, sibling groups and children with additional needs that we require.

Aspire is fortunate that we can recruit a wide range of adopters

In the past year we have recruited adopters from 12 different nationalities. We have recruited couples and single adopters, and 1 in 7 approved adopters are LGBTQ+. We have fine-tuned our messaging and work with adopters to flex around the needs of local children. We do adopt some babies, but we are mainly looking for adopters who will consider older children, sibling groups and children with additional needs.



3.2 At any one time we have approximately 30 available approved adoptive households. If adopters are not matched with Dorset or BCP children, we support them to explore children nationally.

### 3.3 Interagency adoptions

Aspire supports national adopter sufficiency adopters

This year Aspire spent £236,500 on adoptive placements and sold £ 200,000 on placements. A further £103,000 of Aspire adopters are linked with children but will not be progressed until the Somerset guidance is issued.

3.4 The close relationship and tracking we undertake with Dorset mean that by the time the placement order is made, we will know whether Aspire has suitable adopters or not, and immediately look elsewhere to avoid delay for children.

3.5 Our relentless focus on finding families for children means that almost all children with a plan for adoption are found families.

## 4. National Mystery shopper exercise

4.1 The Regional Adoption Agencies funded a programme looking at the effectiveness of response to initial adoption enquiries, website, and social media. Aspire received a rating of 82%.

4.2 The website did not require any improvements. Facebook and YouTube were considered good, but it was suggested that Twitter and Instagram needed improvement. We have identified that most of our prospective adopters use Facebook. As a small agency, it makes sense to concentrate on this medium. The larger report commented on the quality and the helpfulness of our Facebook posts.

## 5. **Post Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Services**

5.1 Aspire offers support to Dorset adopters and Special Guardians until their children reach adult hood. This is a service that families choose to access. We have worked hard

over the last year to eradicate the waiting list and offer an immediate response to families at the lower tiers through a daily duty system.

5.2 The cumulative increase in the number of adopters and special guardians eligible for this support continues to be challenge. This is a small team consisting of just under four FTE social workers and two and half family support workers. We have maximised capacity by reducing bureaucracy.

5.3 The service tries to pre-empt need and offer a greater range of early support services and has increased the range of specialist groups and training. This includes a range of forums and social groups, training in therapeutic parenting, Thera play, therapeutic life story work and great behaviour parenting for teenagers.

**84 parents (Dorset and BCP) attended Aspire training and workshops over 2021-2022. with many more attending the support groups.**

5.4 The service has strong links with and Early Help and universal services who offer bespoke services for our families.

#### 5.6 Education

5.7 Adoption UKs 2021 barometer report found that education is adopters' highest concern. The team has developed strong relationships with Dorset virtual school who offer a mix of direct support and advisory sessions as required. The spring newsletter focused on education and included the Dorset Previously Looked After (PLAC) Information Book. Aspire's service manager is the Virtual School PLAC governor.

5.8 This allows workers to offer short pieces of task centred work for families with more complex needs. **120 Children (Dorset and BCP) are currently receiving direct social work support, with an allocated worker. It generally takes about 3 weeks to be allocated.**

#### 5.9 The Department for Education Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund (ASF)

5.10 The post support team help adopters and special guardians to access the ASF fund completing the required assessment and sourcing the therapists using our procurement framework. This has become increasingly important for our families. and cutting the waiting list has meant we have been able to support significantly more Dorset families access therapeutic services

#### **ASF FUNDS**

2019 /20 57 Families £32,845.99

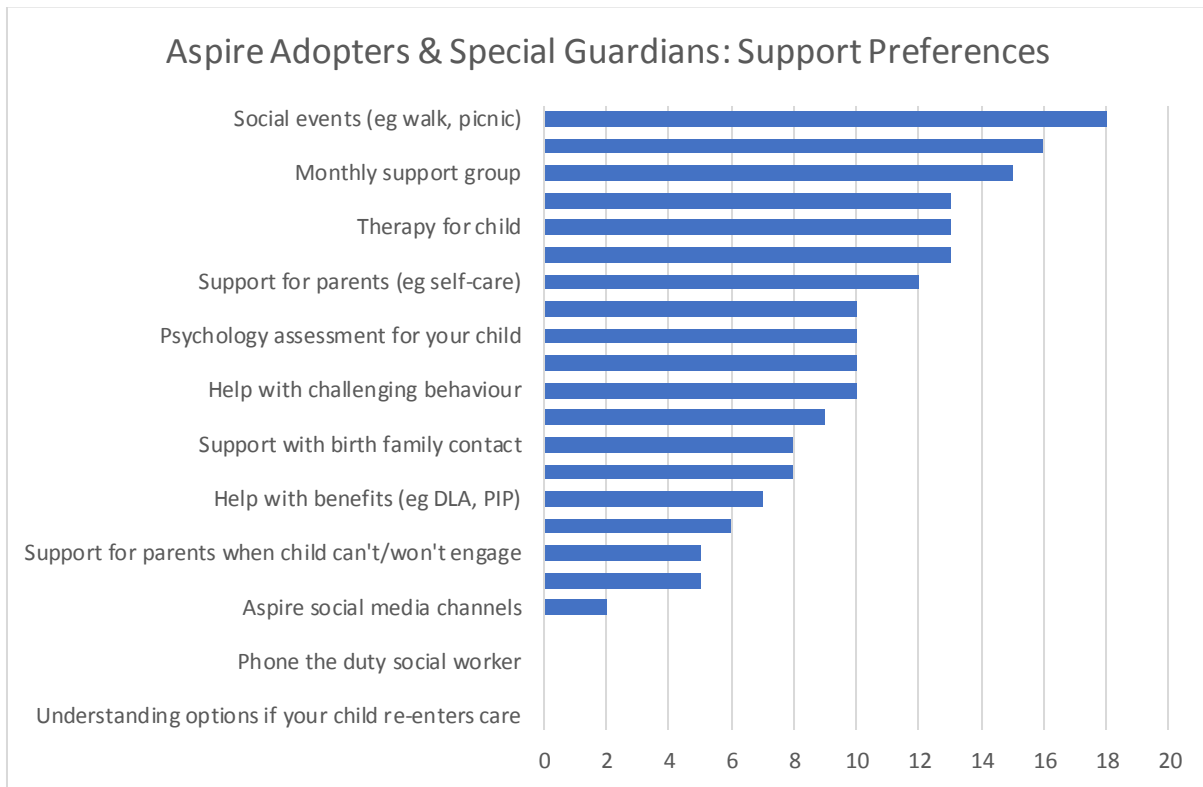
2020/21 130 Families  
£186,183.91

20210/22 261 Families

#### 5.11 Have the changes to the post support service had a positive impact for families?

5.12 Changes were made In consultation with the Adopter and Special Guardianship Forum. While they understood what the service wanted to achieve, there was some anxiety that moving away from a mainly allocated service would reduce the support available to families.

5.13 The forum conducted an independent survey in January 2022 which they kindly agreed we could include in this report.



5.14 The Forums key findings were: -

- **Social events** (e.g., walk, picnic) are the most preferred
- Therapeutic **support for the whole family** is more important than therapy for the child or support (e.g., self-care) for parents
- The **monthly support groups** are highly valued
- The next most preferred support is **Access to ASF, Therapy for the child, and Help with educational settings**

SG story: "We were at breaking point with R being violent to us and her brother. We received support from the team went on the foundations of attachment course and then received some Non-Violence Resistance training. It's not perfect, but home is much calmer now "

Adoption story: twin girls with attachment issues one frequently going missing with risky behaviour. The team worked with the Early help team providing DDP counselling and together prevented the girls coming into care

#### 5.15 Demand for post support services

This service has seen a rapid increase in uptake over the year.

Prior to October, the service averaged 120 calls per month. Since then, it has steadily risen to 200 calls in December and nearly 300 calls each for both January and February.

#### 5.16 The challenge for the Post Adoption and Special Guardianship Service

It is important that Aspire continues to review post support services closely with the Forum to ensure they continue to be accessible, timely, relevant and have impact. But it is clear that an increasing cohort and increasing demand is the greatest issue for the service.

5.17 The board will shortly consider a business case considering whether further efficiencies can be made through developing in house staff to deliver a greater proportion of the ASF therapeutic work which will help build the teams overall capacity.

## **6 Aspire Adoption Panel**

6.1 Adoption panel has continued to meet virtually twice a month.

This year the panel made :-

40 Approvals

28 Matches

4 De-Registrations

6.2 The panel chair reports that the quality of Prospective Adopter Reports always good has improved

Ofsted considered panel minutes and met with the chair. They fed back that that panel was effective and efficient.

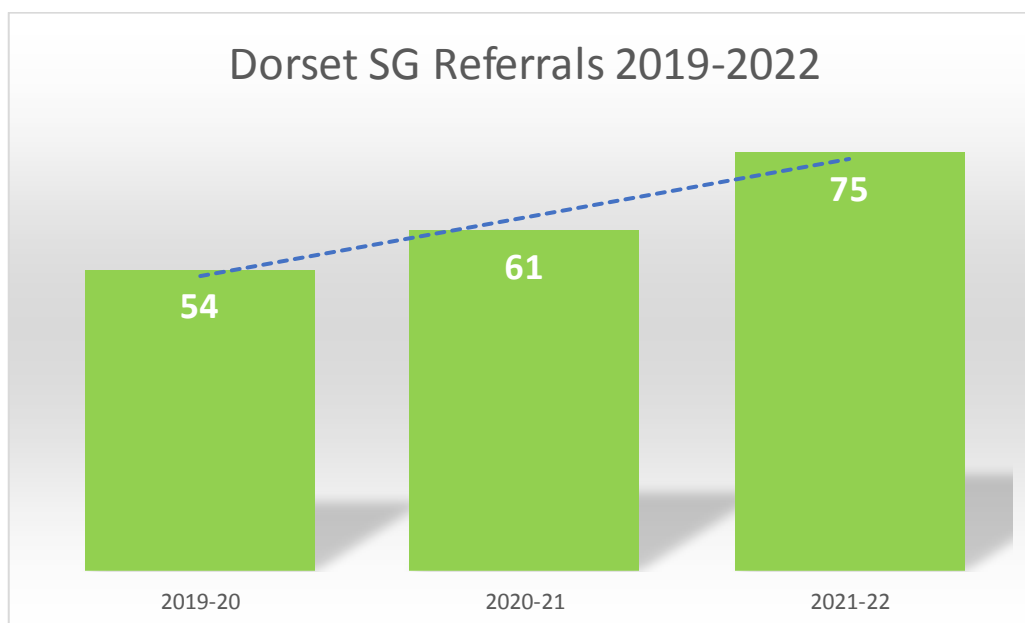
## **7. Birth parent services**

7.1 Aspire commissions an independent Birth Family Matters |(BFM) Support Service from Families for Children. This has been recommissioned from April 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2024 with an option to extend for a further 2 years.

7.2 The service is reviewed quarterly with changes being made to better illustrate the amount and quality of the work undertaken by the service.

7.3 The service has around 100 open referrals and actively works with about 40 birth family members in any one quarter. BFM work closely with Aspire sharing experiences helping inform the service and adopters, how to work sensitively with birth families, promote contact and offers advice regarding the experience of birth family members to the court.

## 8. Special Guardianship Assessment



### SG Assessments completed

	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Total
Dorset	7	9	9	9	34

8.1 It should be noted that slightly less than half of the Special guardianship referrals result in a full assessment being completed. This dropout rate is to be expected for a variety of reasons. For example the family may decide that they cannot offer permanence, more than one family member is being assessed, issues arise in the course of the assessment or the child's plan might change.

8.2 In the last 6 months Dorset has supported higher percentage of children to leave care through special guardianship than average.

Dorset last 6 months 20% in 2020-21 Dorset 12% England and Good rate was 14% (1/10/21 to 30/3/22) Children's Services Analysis Tool



8.3 The number of Special guardianship referrals from Dorset has risen and Dorset indicate that this is likely to remain the case as it is preferred that children live with their families wherever that is feasible.

8.4 Dorset and BCP agreed to expand the service by 1 social worker at the May 2021 board. To increase capacity from 100 to 120 pa for both authorities. Aspire has taken 159 assessments in total this year.

#### 8.5 Special Guardianship Referrals for both Local Authorities

2019-20 110

2020-21 140

2021-22 159

8.6 Where demand exceeds capacity Independent social workers are commissioned. These are more expensive, and parts of the assessment still must be completed by Aspire and the child's worker.

8.7 Dorset have been considering this matter. Aspire has undertaken to complete an options paper for the board.

### **9. Finance**

Aspire is funded 49% by Dorset and 51% by BCP. Considerable work took place to agree a 3-year budget for Aspire from 2022 to 2025. The financial model as agreed by the Strategic Partnership Board is included at Appendix 5

In terms of this financial year although the figures have not been fully signed off it we are expecting to report that Aspire has come within budget.

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1**

#### **1. Local authority statutory responsibilities**

1.1 The Adoption and Children Act 2002 sets out the duty all Local Authorities to establish and maintain an adoption service, 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 in their area

- 1.2 On the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017 Dorset County Council delegated most of those functions, along with some statutory responsibilities in relation to special guardianship, to Aspire Adoption, a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA). The division of responsibilities is detailed in Appendix 1.
- 1.3 Aspire (RAA) is funded by Dorset County Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council to deliver adoption and special guardianship services.
- 1.4 Each local authority retains overall responsibility for their adoption and special guardianship services, continuing to have parental responsibility for their own Children in Care, but delegating most adoption and some special guardianship functions to Aspire Adoption.
- 1.5 Aspire works closely with colleagues in the voluntary adoption sector, Families for Children and Parents and Children Together (PACT) are represented on the Aspire Partnership Board.
- 1.6 It is a requirement that elected members satisfy themselves that the Local Authority and the Regional Adoption Agency are working together to meet the needs of children requiring permanence through adoption as laid out by the Statutory Adoption Guidance 2013 and the Adoption Minimum Standards 2014.

The 2014 Adoption Minimum Standards can be accessed at

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/336069/Adoption NMS July 2014 for publication.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/336069/Adoption_NMS_July_2014_for_publication.pdf)

The 2013 Statutory Adoption Guidance can be accessed at

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/270100/adoption statutory guidance 2013.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/270100/adoption_statutory_guidance_2013.pdf)

## **Appendix 2**

### **Division of roles and responsibilities between Aspire and the local authorities**

- 2.1 Aspire has been delegated all of the local authority statutory responsibilities for adoption, other than the court work leading to Care and Placement Orders.
- 2.2 Aspire has responsibility for recruiting, assessing and supporting prospective adopters, for non-agency adoption work including partner adoptions and intercountry adoptions.

- 2.3 The local authorities retain overall responsibility for their Children in Care, but have delegated case responsibility for the majority of children with adoption plans to Aspire following the granting of a Placement Order.
- 2.4 Aspire is responsible for family finding for all children with adoption plans. The RAA is also responsible for preparing children for a move to adoption, for preparing moving calendars or diaries, undertaking life story work and creating life story books.
- 2.5 Aspire undertakes special guardianship assessments for court on behalf of the local authority as part of care proceedings, or in private law applications.
- 2.6 Aspire provides support to all parties affected by adoption, including adopters, adoptive families, adopted adults and birth relatives, and to special guardians, families created through special guardianship, and to the birth families whose children are subject to SGOs.
- 2.7 The table on the following page sums up the division of responsibilities between Aspire and the local authorities.

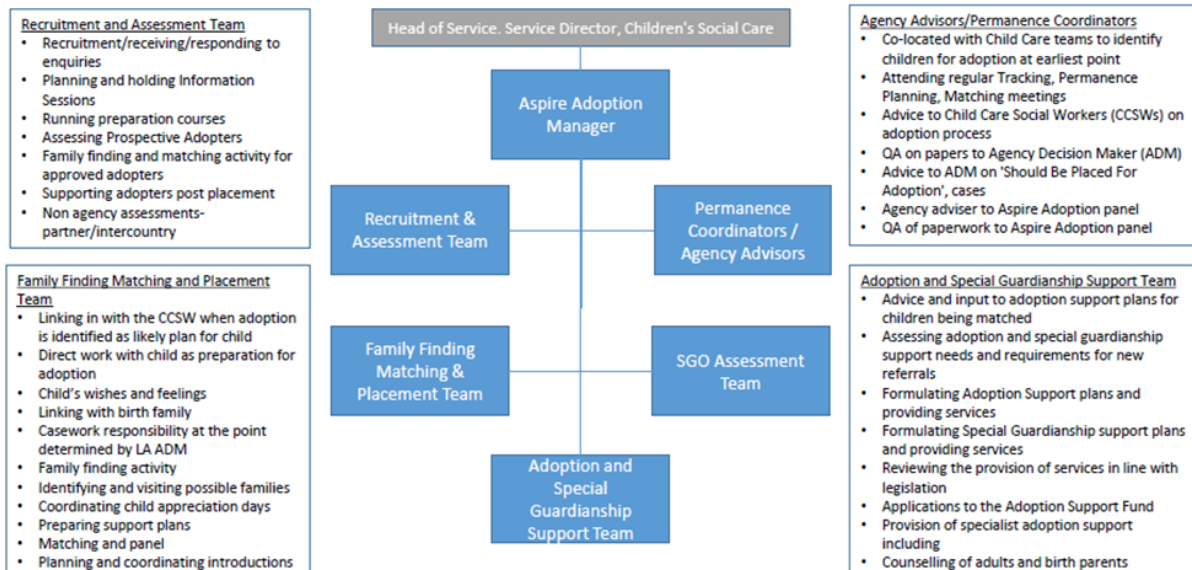
Function	Regional Adoption Agency	Local Authority
<b>RECRUITMENT AND ASSESSMENT</b>		
Marketing and Recruitment Strategy	✓	
Adopter Recruitment and Enquiries	✓	
Assessment of Prospective Adopters – all Stage One and Stage Two functions	✓	
Completion of Prospective Adopter Report	✓	
Agency Decision Maker for approval of adopters	✓	
Post approval training	✓	
Matching	✓	
Post Placement training for Prospective Adopters	✓	
<b>PERMANENCE PLANNING</b>		
Early identification of a child possibly requiring adoption		✓
Tracking and monitoring the child possibly requiring adoption	✓	✓
Support and advice to childcare social worker on the adoption process	✓	✓
Sibling or other specialist assessments if commissioned by LA	✓	
Direct work to prepare child prior to placement	✓	
Preparation of the Child Permanence Report		✓
Agency Decision Maker for “Should be placed for Adoption” decisions		✓
Case management prior to the point agreed by the LA ADM		✓
Case management from point agreed by the LA ADM	✓	
<b>MATCHING AND PLACEMENT</b>		
Family finding	✓	
Looked After Child reviews	✓	✓
Shortlist and visit potential families	✓	
Organising child appreciation day	✓	
Ongoing direct work to prepare child prior to placement	✓	
Adoption Panel administration and management	✓	
Agency adviser role	✓	
Agency Decision Maker for Matching prospective adopters and child	✓	
Placement Planning meeting administration and management of introductions	✓	
Support to family post placement and planning and delivery of adoption support	✓	
Ongoing life story work and preparation of Life story book	✓	
Independent Review Officer monitoring of quality of child’s care and care plan		✓

Support prospective adopters in preparation and submission of application for Adoption Order – including attending at court	✓	
Preparation of later life letter	✓	
<b>ADOPTION AND SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP SUPPORT</b>		
Assessment for adoption or special guardianship support	✓	
Developing and delivering adoption and special guardianship support plans	✓	
Agree and administer financial support to adoptive families pre and post Adoption Order		✓
Adoption and special guardianship support delivery including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support groups</li> <li>• Social events</li> <li>• Post adoption/special guardianship training</li> <li>• Independent Birth Relative services</li> <li>• Support with ongoing birth relative contact</li> <li>• Specialist Life Story practitioners</li> <li>• Adoption counselling and training</li> </ul>	✓	
Financial support to adopters and special guardians including adoption and special guardianship allowances		✓
<b>SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP ORDERS</b>		
Receipt of application or court request for special guardianship		✓
Assessment of applicants for Special Guardianship	✓	
<b>NON-AGENCY ADOPTIONS</b>		
Step parent/partner adoption assessments	✓	
Intercountry adoption assessments and post approval and post order support	✓	

### Appendix 3

#### Aspire Organisational Structure and Staffing

**Aspire Adoption - Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) – Organisation Structure**



**2. Staffing**

- 2.1 There are 43.61 permanent full -time equivalent posts in Aspire with the permanent staffing establishment supplemented by those on casual or fixed term contracts to increase capacity where needed. Many of the staff work part time, with the total number of staff comprising of social workers, support workers, and business support staff totalling about 54.
- 2.2 The service is led and managed by the Aspire Adoption Service Manager, is a qualified social worker, has a management qualification and is registered with Social Work England.
- 2.3 The Recruitment & Assessment Team comprises of a team manager, assistant manager, 7.5 social workers. All are registered with Social Work England
- 2.4 The Family Finding, Matching and Placement Team comprises of a team manager, assistant manager and 3 . 8 FTE social workers, all of whom are registered with Social Work England, and 3.64 FTE family support workers.
- 2.5 The Special Guardianship Assessment team has a team manager, assistant manager and 5.5 social workers and 10 zero hours a week. The ATM and 18.5 hour posts are being recruited to. All are registered with Social Work England.
- 2.6 The Adoption & Special Guardianship Support team has a team manager, assistant team manager and 4. 7 FTE social workers, all of whom are registered with Social Work England. The team also has 2.5 FTE family support workers
- 2.7 There are 2 FTE Permanence Coordinators, who also act as Agency Advisors to the Aspire Adoption Panel and Aspire Agency Decision Maker, and to the Agency Decision Makers in the local authorities in relation to decisions as to whether a child should be adopted.

- 2.8 The service is supported by 6 FTE business support staff including a senior business support officer, a panel administrator, and a marketing, media and monitoring officer.
- 2.9 All of the social workers employed by Aspire are registered with Social Work England, and many of the staff, including support workers, have additional qualifications including skills in a variety of therapeutic interventions such as theraplay, sensory integration, mindfulness and DDP (Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy).
- 2.10 Aspire also has access to dedicated clinical psychology support for staff and service users.

### **3. Staff training and development**

- 3.1 Staff in Aspire have access to training and courses run by Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole Council as the host authority paying for these from the Aspire training budget of £8,000 a year. They have access to external courses, but only dependent on budgetary restrictions. In 2020/21 12 members staff attended Dyadic Developmental Parenting training.
- 3.2 Staff have monthly supervision and annual appraisals, and regular team case and practice reflection sessions are facilitated by the clinical psychologists
- 3.3 A staff forum for all staff in Aspire is held every 4 months to update on Aspire performance data, local and national issues relating to the service and to develop the team service plans.

## **Appendix 4**

## Governance

The following is taken from the Inter Authority Agreement

### SCHEDULE 2 – TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### Governance Structure



#### Part 1 – Strategic Partnership Board

**1 Name:**

The name of the Board for Aspire Adoption shall be the **Strategic Partnership Board** which is established pursuant to an Inter Authority Agreement between Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset County Council and the Borough of Poole ("the Councils") for the creation of a Regional Adoption Agency. \* This agreement predated Local Authority reorganisation but has been taken on by Dorset and BCP Councils

**2 Role:**

The Board will provide advice, oversight and endorsement of the strategic direction of Aspire Adoption.

**3 The Board will:**

- 3.1 Provide and review the strategic direction of Aspire Adoption.
- 3.2 Oversee, review and endorse budget setting and make recommendations to the Councils for Aspire Adoption.
  - 3.2.1 Oversee, review and endorse the Business Plan annually and make recommendations to the Councils for Aspire Adoption.
  - 3.2.2 Attempt to resolve disputes between the Councils under the terms of the Inter Authority Agreement.

**4 Accountability and Responsibility:**

- 4.1 Each Local Authority is responsible for ensuring that their nominated representative(s) (or named substitute) are available to attend all Board meetings, which will be scheduled in advance.
- 4.2 All members of the Board will be in a position to make decisions within their respective organisation, where appropriate.
- 4.3 All members of the Board will be responsible for reporting to their organisation, through their respective governance arrangements.

## **5 Meetings of the Board**

- 5.1 The Board will meet every six months or at a greater or lesser frequency if it so decides.
- 5.2 The Board will elect a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson from amongst its members.
- 5.3 The Chairperson will agree the dates, times and venues for the meetings of the Board. The meeting timetable will be scheduled over the year, to reflect both planned monitoring and evaluation requirements.
- 5.4 The Chairperson shall normally preside at all meetings of the Board.
- 5.5 The Chairperson will be responsible for agreeing meeting agendas and draft minutes for circulation.
- 5.6 Agendas and papers for the meeting will be sent out at least five working days prior to the meeting in order to provide time for members of the Board to read them and identify actions for their own organisations.
- 5.7 Minutes of meeting will be circulated within 5 working days after the meeting with an action list.

## **6 Membership:**

- 6.1 The Board will consist of:
  - 6.1.1 Portfolio Holder and Executive Director for Childrens Services for BCP Council;
  - 6.1.2 Cabinet Member for Learning, Skills and Children's Safeguarding and Corporate Director for Children's, Adults and Community Services for Dorset Council;
  - 6.1.3 Portfolio Holder and Strategic Director for Childrens Services for the Borough of Poole Council.
- 6.2 The Board will consult (so far as it considers proper and appropriate to do so):
  - 6.2.1 Representatives from local Voluntary Adoption Agencies/Families for Children; and
  - 6.2.2 A representative from Stakeholders.
- 6.3 Members of the Board should:
  - 6.3.1 Commit to attending the majority of meetings or nominate a suitable substitute who can attend in their place who will be expected to exercise the powers of the Member for whom they are substituting. Only Board members or their named representatives can attend Board meetings.
  - 6.3.2 Uphold and support the Board decisions and be prepared to follow though actions and decisions for the Board proposals and declaring any conflict of interest should it arise.
  - 6.3.3 Be prepared to represent the Board at stakeholder events and support the agreed consensus view of the Board when speaking on behalf of the Board to other parties.

## **7 Voting – Quorum**



- 7.1 No quorum is necessary for the routine business and the receiving of reports. However, where the Chairperson determines that a critical decision is required there must be a representative from all the Councils.
- 7.2 In the spirit of effective collaboration and partnership working, the Board will always seek to come to agreement through consensus and unanimity following debate and discussion where all the members will be encouraged to participate.
- 7.3 The Members of the Board will be expected to subscribe to the seven principles of public life in their work and decision making. The principles are selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- 7.4 Members will be expected to declare any personal interests in the business of the Board and to withdraw from participation where such interests are prejudicial or pecuniary.

## **Part 2 – Operational Management Board**

### **1 Name:**

The name of the Board for Aspire Adoption shall be the **Operational Management Board** which is established pursuant to an Inter Authority Agreement between BCP Council and Dorset Council ("the Councils") for the creation of a Regional Adoption Agency.

### **2 Role:**

The Board will provide support, advice, and management to Aspire Adoption to ensure that statutory requirements and the Business Plan is delivered effectively.

### **3 The Board will:**

- 3.1 oversee the implementation of the Aspire Adoption Budget and Business Plan.
- 3.2 oversee the commissioning arrangements and operational performance against agreed local priorities and targets and in line with national priorities and targets.

### **4 Accountability and Responsibility:**

- 4.1 Each Local Authority is responsible for ensuring that their nominated representative(s) (or named substitute) are available to attend all Board meetings, which will be scheduled in advance.
- 4.2 This Board will report to the Strategic Partnership Board.

### **5 Meetings of the Board**

- 5.1 The Board will meet quarterly or at a greater or lesser frequency if it so decides.
- 5.2 The Board will elect a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson from amongst its members.
- 5.3 The Chairperson will agree the dates, times and venues for the meetings of the Board. The meeting timetable will be scheduled over the year, to reflect both planned monitoring and evaluation requirements.
- 5.4 The Chairperson shall normally preside at all meetings of the Board.
- 5.5 The Chairperson will be responsible for agreeing meeting agendas and draft minutes for circulation.

- 5.6 Agendas and papers for the meeting will be sent out at least five working days prior to the meeting to provide time for members of the Board to read them and identify actions for their own organisations.
- 5.7 Minutes of meeting will be circulated within 5 working days after the meeting with an action list.

## **6 Membership:**

- 6.1 The Board will consist of:
  - 6.1.1 Service Director for Children's Social Care for BCP.
  - 6.1.2 Assistant Director – Care and Protection for Dorset
  - 6.1.5 Adoption Aspire Manager.
- 6.2 Members of the Board should:
  - 6.2.1 Commit to attending most meetings or nominate a suitable substitute who can attend in their place who will be expected to exercise the powers of the Member for whom they are substituting. Only Board members or their named representatives can attend Board meetings.
  - 6.2.2 Uphold and support the Board decisions and be prepared to follow through actions and decisions and declaring any conflict of interest should it arise.
  - 6.2.3 Be prepared to represent the Board at stakeholder events and support the agreed consensus view of the Board when speaking on behalf of the Board to other parties.

## **7 Voting – Quorum**

- 7.1 No quorum is necessary for the routine business and the receiving of reports. However where the Chairperson determines that a critical decision is required there must be a representative from all the Councils.
- 7.2 In the spirit of effective collaboration and partnership working, the Board will always seek to come to agreement through consensus and unanimity following debate and discussion where all the members will be encouraged to participate.
- 7.3 The Members of the Board will be expected to subscribe to the seven principles of public life in their work and decision making. The principles are selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership.
- 7.4 Members will be expected to declare any personal interests in the business of the Board and to withdraw from participation where such interests are prejudicial or pecuniary.

## **Appendix 5 -**

### **Aspire Adoption Panel**

- 5.1 Aspire Adoption operates an Adoption Panel, constituted in accordance with legislation, regulations and guidance. The panel has an independent chairperson, and 16 members on a Central List from which each panel is drawn. There is no legal maximum number of panel members at each panel but in practice, a maximum of 6 or 7 attend each panel, including the panel chair and a social worker. The designated doctor for looked after children in the local authorities funding Aspire is also the agency medical adviser and is a full member of the panel.
- 5.2 The panel is serviced by a panel administrator and has access to legal advice if needed. The professional advice to the panel is provided by the two Permanence Coordinators, one of whom attends each Panel to ensure the smooth running and to advise on policies and procedures.
- 5.3 Current membership includes individuals with personal experience of adoption as adopters and adopted adults. It also includes experienced social workers with direct experience of adoption work, a psychotherapist with experience of working in a child and adolescent mental health setting, and panel members with experience of working in an educational setting.
- 5.4 Members of the Central List from which individual panel membership is drawn reflect the diversity of modern society as far as possible, and include those who are single, in heterosexual and same sex relationships. One panel member on the Central List has personal experience of disability. There is some diversity in terms of age, with panel members in their 30s and others who are retired. Although most panel members are of white British ethnic origin, one panel member is of black African ethnicity, and another is of Indian descent.
- 5.5 The functions of the panel in relation to adoption matters are
- to recommend whether prospective adopters are suitable to adopt a child.
  - to recommend whether a proposed match between a child and prospective adopters is a suitable one.
  - In circumstances where a child is relinquished for adoption and no Placement Order is applied for, the panel will recommend whether the child should be placed for adoption
- 5.6 The panel can also give advice about the numbers and ages of children in relation to prospective adopters, also about post adoption contact, delegated parental responsibility and adoption support. The panel has a consultative role regarding

the agency's policies and procedures, and a monitoring role regarding quality assurance and ensuring that the time scales set out in the Adoption & Children Act 2002 are met.

- 5.7 The Aspire Adoption Panel makes recommendations based on detailed written reports prepared by the child's social worker and adoption social worker, and the social worker and team manager's attendance at panel to clarify points if needed.
- 5.8 When considering the approval or deregistration of prospective adopters or a match between prospective adopters and a child, adoptive applicants have the option of attending panel in person, to provide scope to discuss and clarify any issues relevant to the application. Applicants who decide not to attend in person are not disadvantaged in any way and no judgement is made from their decision not to do so although every effort will be made to assist their attendance.
- 5.9 The recommendations and advice of the panel are referred, along with the final agreed minutes of the meeting, to the Agency Decision Maker, for a decision to be made and conveyed to all parties within the time scales laid down in the Adoption & Children Act 2002.
- 5.10 The Panel chair is independent, is an experienced chair and an adopter of 2 children. He attends the Aspire Strategic Partnership Board and presents a report to the Aspire Operational Management Board and Strategic Partnership Board every 6 months in line with standard 17 of the Adoption Minimum Standards, on the quality of reports being presented to the panel. This includes whether the requirements of the Restrictions on the Preparation of Adoption Reports Regulations 2005 have been met, and whether there is a thorough, rigorous, consistent and fair approach across the service in the assessment of whether a child should be placed for adoption, the suitability of prospective adopters and the proposed placement. His most recent report is included as Appendix 5
- 5.11 In 2020/21 the Adoption Panels have all been held virtually due to the covid 19 pandemic. The panels have adjusted well to the new way of working and business has been uninterrupted.

## **Appendix 6**

**Aspire Adoption 3-year Financial Modal attached**

## Aspire Adoption Aspire Adoption 3 year Financial Model

---

### Financial model for 2022/2023 to 2024/2025

- 1.1 The meeting of the Aspire Strategic Partnership Board on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2021 requested a 3-year financial model of Aspire for 2022/2023 to 2024/2025 incorporating additional investment agreed at previous boards plus additional investment shown below. The 3-year financial model is shown in Appendix A.
- 1.2 It was identified at the last board meeting that work is required to update the use of Mosiac and performance reporting. This business critical activity is over reliant on one member of staff. The modifications and training require 0.5 fte band H project worker for a period of 6 months, this has been built into the figures in Appendix A for 2022/2023.
- 1.3 It was identified at the last board meeting that staff required specialist training to support recruitment and support. It is proposed that this is agreed on the basis that there are sufficient funds within the Aspire training budget and within the calculations for the project worker in 1.2 to cover the additional £10,000 spend on Training.
- 1.4 The Board in September also agreed in principal that Aspire would receive Pay award inflation, this has been built into the 3 year model with an assumption of a 2% pay award. It is currently assumed this would be the maximum pay award level, however the 2021/2022 pay award is currently unresolved, the current offer of 1.75% having been rejected by the Unions. Further papers would be presented to the board if pay awards vary significantly from the 2% level.
- 1.5 Contribution rises are shown in Appendix A but in summary assuming the pay award principal is agreed would be as below, using the agreed funding ratios 41% Dorset Council, 59% BCP.

Contribution levels;	2022/2023 Increase	2023/2024 Increase	2024/2025 Increase	Total Increase
Dorset Council	17,400	17,800	18,100	53,300
BCP Council	25,000	25,500	26,100	76,600
<b>Total Contribution Increases</b>	<b>42,400</b>	<b>43,300</b>	<b>44,200</b>	<b>129,900</b>

- 1.6 Central to the 3 year budget position is that Interagency Fee Expenditure costs are picked up by the local authorities and also that the Interagency income exceeds the £200,000 budget. Income in excess of £200,000 can be redistributed to Local Authorities to offset Interagency expenditure spend. If Income is not sufficient to be redistributed then the Local authorities have agreed to pay their Interagency expenditure costs entirely.
- 1.7 Whilst every year is different in terms of the balance between interagency Expenditure and Income the current position for 2021/2022 is shown below for reference;

<b>Interagency Income and Expenditure October 2021</b>	
	<b>£</b>
<b>Interagency Income</b>	
Received to date/Due	<b>(101,479)</b>
Further sums expected	<b>(334,000)</b>
<b>Total Income available</b>	<b>(435,479)</b>
<b>Income available to redistribute</b>	<b>(235,479)</b>
<b>Interagency Expenditure</b>	
BCP Cases	<b>149,986</b>
Dorset Council Cases	<b>106,188</b>
<b>Total forecast Expenditure</b>	<b>256,174</b>
<b>(Surplus)/ Deficit after Redistribution</b>	<b>20,695</b>

- 1.8 From the above position on interagency and the general position for Aspire in Appendix A it appears the provisions in the Partnership Agreement for recharging overspends would not be required in 2021/2022. Although there may be a small deficit on the Interagency position after redistribution this would be able to be absorbed within other underspending areas within Aspire.
- 1.9 In addition, the Adoption Support fund may deliver some income for Aspire, the exact amount does not become clear until later in the financial year, however in excess of £20k is usually available in each financial year which can help smooth the position in year.
- 1.10 It is not expected that there will be any additional funding provided via the Covid Support funding in 21/22 but all potential funding streams will be monitored during the year.
- 1.11 It is hoped that this new arrangement could deliver some surpluses which could be added to an Aspire Reserve. This was set up in the first year of Aspire in 2017 but was utilised in full in 2018 to meet the pressures on the service.

### **Budget Setting 2022/2023**

- 2.1 The immediate requirement is to set a balanced budget for Aspire for 2022/2023 before February 2022. The increases required for 2022/2023 based on the 3 year financial model in Appendix A are **£17,400** Dorset Council and **£25,000** BCP Council.

Stephen MacDonald  
Jo Collis- Heavens  
Michelle Whiting

Management Accountant – Childrens Services  
Finance Manager  
Aspire Adoption Service Manager

November 2021

### Aspire Adoption 3 year financial model - 2022/2023 to 2024/2025

Spend Areas	Notes	2022/2023 Base Budget	2022/2023 Inflation	2022/2023 Final Budget	2023/2024 Inflation	2023/2024 Final Budget	2024/2025 Inflation	2024/2025 Final Budget	Total Contribution Increase over 3 years
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Staffing Teams</b>									
Aspire Manager	Assumed Permanent Appointment 1 x FTE April 2022	94,300	1,900	96,200	1,900	98,100	2,000	100,100	
SGO Assessment	1 x TM, 1 x ATM, 5 x SW	356,100	7,100	363,200	7,300	370,500	7,400	377,900	
Family Finding	1 x TM, 1 x ATM, 4.6 x SW, 3.7 x FSP	457,400	9,100	466,500	9,300	475,800	9,500	485,300	
Recruitment and Assessment	2 x TM, 1 x ATM, 6.6 x SW	459,800	9,200	469,000	9,400	478,400	9,600	488,000	
Adoption and SG Support	1 x TM, 1 x ATM, 3.8 x SW, 2.5 x FSP	367,200	7,300	374,500	7,500	382,000	7,600	389,600	
Business Support	0.8 TM, 5.8 BSO, 1 x Media Marketing. 0.5 x Additional Mosaic	228,800	4,600	233,400	4,700	238,100	4,800	242,900	
Permanance Coordinators	2 x Permanence Coordinator	114,400	2,300	116,700	2,300	119,000	2,400	121,400	
Additional staffing spend	Additional zero hours spend e.g. SGO assesments	13,600	300	13,900	300	14,200	300	14,500	
<b>Total Projected Spend Staffing</b>		<b>2,091,600</b>	<b>41,800</b>	<b>2,133,400</b>	<b>42,700</b>	<b>2,176,100</b>	<b>43,600</b>	<b>2,219,700</b>	
Other Employee Costs	Training, Medical expenses	11,300		11,300		11,300		11,300	
Premises	Cost of Kinson Hub or equivalent in future	30,000		30,000		30,000		30,000	
Transport	Mileage - reduced during Covid pandemic	30,000		30,000		30,000		30,000	
Supplies and Services	ICT, Accountancy, Equipment, Legal fees	51,800		51,800		51,800		51,800	
Adoption Panel	Costs of running panels	28,000		28,000		28,000		28,000	
Infant Birth Records Service	IBRS costs to Families for Children	30,000		30,000		30,000		30,000	
Psychologist	Including inflation	30,000	600	30,600	600	31,200	600	31,800	
Interagency Income	Sums in excess of this used to offset BCP and Dorset Interagency Fee costs	-200,000		-200,000		-200,000		-200,000	
<b>Total Budget / Budget Movements</b>		<b>2,102,700</b>	<b>42,400</b>	<b>2,145,100</b>	<b>43,300</b>	<b>2,188,400</b>	<b>44,200</b>	<b>2,232,600</b>	
<b>Contribution levels;</b>									
<b>Dorset Council</b>		857,840	17,400	875,240	17,800	893,040	18,100	911,140	53,300
<b>BCP Council</b>		1,244,860	25,000	1,269,860	25,500	1,295,360	26,100	1,321,460	76,600
<b>Total Contributions</b>		<b>2,102,700</b>	<b>42,400</b>	<b>2,145,100</b>	<b>43,300</b>	<b>2,188,400</b>	<b>44,200</b>	<b>2,232,600</b>	<b>129,900</b>

This page is intentionally left blank





## **Aspire Adoption**

# **Statement of Purpose 2022 - 2023**



## **Introduction**

Aspire Adoption is a Regional Adoption Agency, established in July 2017, with delegated responsibility for discharging most of the adoption functions of Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset County Council and the Borough of Poole. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019, as a result of local government reorganisation, the councils funding Aspire are Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council and Dorset Council. Aspire Adoption works in partnership with the Voluntary Adoption Agency, Families for Children (F4C) and Parents and Children Together (PACT)

This statement of purpose has been written in accordance with the Adoption & Children Act 2002 and associated Regulations, and the Adoption Statutory Guidance 2013. It fulfils the requirements of Regulations 2 and 4 of the Local Authority Adoption Service (England) Regulations 2003; Regulations 3 and 24B and Regulations 4 and 24 C of the Voluntary Adoption Agencies and the Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2003; and of Regulations 5 and 6 of the Adoption Support Agencies (England) and Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2005. It also fulfils the requirements of Standard 18 of the National Minimum Standards for Adoption 2014.

The 2014 Adoption Minimum Standards can be accessed at

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/336069/Adoption\\_NMS\\_July\\_2014\\_for\\_publication.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/336069/Adoption_NMS_July_2014_for_publication.pdf)

The 2013 Statutory Adoption Guidance can be accessed at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adoption-statutory-guidance-2013>

## **Principles and Value Statement**

The principles of the Children Act 1989, Children Act 2004, the Adoption & Children Act 2002 and accompanying Regulations and Statutory Guidance, the Children and Families Act 2014, the Education and Adoption Act 2016, the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, and the Adoption National Minimum Standards 2014, all underpin the work of Aspire Adoption.

The values statement in Appendix A is adapted from the 2011 and 2014 National Minimum Standards, and sums up the important principles which underpin all adoption work within Aspire and within the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, and Dorset Council in their permanency planning for children for whom adoption is the care plan. These values are equally applicable to children for whom special guardianship is the care plan.

Aspire is committed to promoting diversity and non-discriminatory practice.

### Aims and objectives

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. Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and Dorset Council have delegated most of those functions to Aspire Adoption, a Regional Adoption Agency. Further information can be found about this in the Schedule of Responsibilities in Annex B, part of the Inter Authority Agreement between the local authorities. It explains in more detail what functions remain in the local authority and which have been delegated to Aspire. Aspire Adoption is hosted by Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole Council.

Aspire Adoption aims to ensure that children who are unable to live with their birth family and for whom adoption or special guardianship has been agreed as the plan, can live in a permanent, stable and loving family in which their needs will be fully met throughout their lives. This can only be achieved if the needs of all of those touched by adoption are also supported, including adoptive parents, adopted adults and birth relatives of those who have been adopted or made the subject of Special Guardianship Orders

The name "*Aspire Adoption*" reflects the aspiration to learn, to build on existing good practice and achieve practice improvements in the delivery of services for children, adopters and others who benefit from or need adoption and special guardianship services in the area covered by Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole Council and Dorset Council.

Aspire's vision and the objectives aimed for are to achieve excellent outcomes for children and adults affected by adoption and special guardianship by:

- Working closely with our partner local authorities and other stakeholders to ensure that children's best interests are at the heart of placement decisions which will fully meet their needs.
- Targeted recruitment and the establishment of a wide and diverse pool of prospective adopters.

- Matching so that children are placed without delay in secure, loving families.
- Undertaking special guardianship assessments which are thorough, evidence based, and timely.
- Providing creative and outstanding adoption and special guardianship support services.
- Investing in our workforce to ensure they have the right skills and capacity to deliver excellent services.
- Continually seeking to apply best practice and innovation to our ways of working.
- Actively listening to and learning from children, adults and staff with whom we work to develop and improve the services provided.

#### The Registered Manager/Responsible Officer

The Registered Manager for Aspire under regulation 5 of the Local Authority Adoption Service (England) Regulations 2003 is Michelle Whiting, Interim Service Manager, Aspire Adoption Services.

The Responsible Officer for Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole Council is Jane White, Director of Children's Social Care and YOS Children's Services, BCP Council.

The Responsible Officer for Dorset Council is Paul Dempsey , Corporate Director Children's Services, Care and Protection Dorset Council.

There are five Agency Decision Makers (ADMs).

Jane White Director of Children's Social Care and YOS Children's Services and Aleksandra Zabielskia Service Manager CAHAD are ADMs for decisions about whether BCP Council children in the care of the local authority should have a plan for adoption, and for matches for those children.

Lisa Reid( Consultant Quality Assurance) and Louise Drury (Head of Service for Children in Care) are ADMs for decisions about whether Dorset children in the care of the local authority should have a plan for adoption, and for matches for those children.

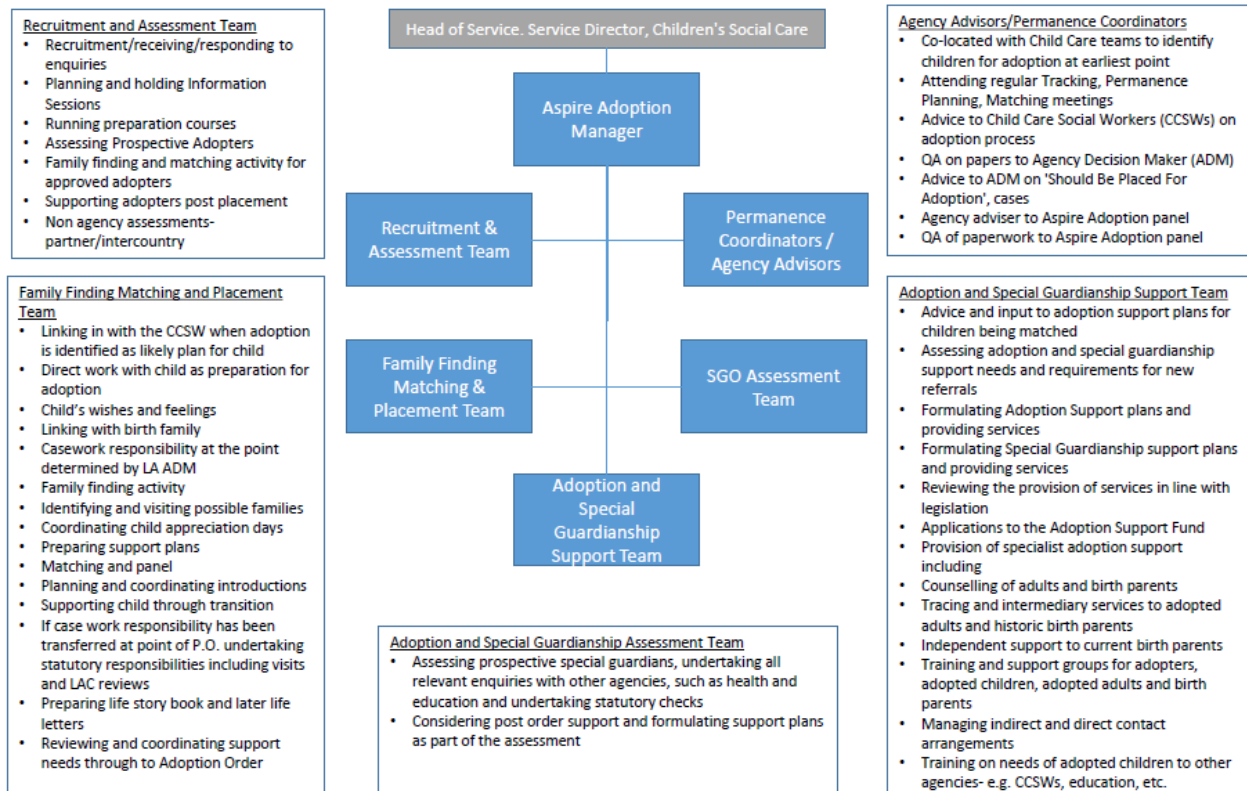
The ADMs in each of the authorities are also responsible for decision making in respect of the temporary approval of adopters as foster carers for early permanence placements.

Michelle Whiting, Interim Service Manager for Aspire Adoption, is ADM for decisions about the suitability of prospective adopters.

All have social work and management qualifications and are registered with Social Work England.

## Organisational Structure of Aspire Adoption

### Aspire Adoption - Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) – Organisation Structure



The service is led and managed by the Aspire Adoption Interim Service Manager, Michelle Whiting. Ms Whiting is a qualified social worker, has a relevant management qualification and is registered with Social Work England as a social worker.

The Recruitment & Assessment Team comprises of a team manager, practice manager, 7.44 FTE social workers. All are registered with Social Work England as social workers. The team also has a 0.5 FTE family support practitioner.

The Family Finding, Matching and Placement Team comprises of a team manager, practice manager, 5.39 FTE social workers, all of whom are registered with Social Work England as social workers, and 3.71 FTE family support practitioners.

The Special Guardianship Assessment team has a team manager, practice manager and 4.65 FTE social workers. All are registered with Social Work England as social workers.

The Adoption & Special Guardianship Support team has a team manager, practice manager and 4 FTE social workers, all of whom are registered with Social Work England as social workers. The team also has 2.59 FTE family support worker posts, and access to a 0.4 FTE clinical psychologist.

There are 2 full time Permanence Coordinators, who also act as Agency Advisers to the Aspire Adoption Panel and Aspire Agency Decision Maker, and to the Agency Decision Makers in the local authorities in relation to decisions as to whether a child should be adopted.

The service is supported by 6 FTE business support staff including a senior business support officer, a panel administrator and a marketing, media and monitoring officer.

All staff are based at the Aspire Adoption headquarters which is at the Kinson Hub, 1599 Wimborne Rd, Bournemouth BH11 9AW. Social workers and support workers have lightweight laptops and smart phones and can work from home or from touch down points across Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset or further afield.

### Roles and responsibilities

The successful delivery of the services provided by Aspire is dependent on a high level of joint working between Aspire and Aspire's partner local authorities. The table below sets out how Aspire and the three local authorities will ensure that all the agencies work together effectively in the best interests of children and families affected by or created through adoption or special guardianship. More detail is provided in Appendix B in the Schedule of Responsibilities which forms part of the Inter Authority Agreement between the local authorities. Aspire also works in partnership with the local Voluntary Adoption Agency, Families for Children, running joint training and support groups for service users and commissioning out to Families for Children an independent support service for birth relatives, Birth Family Matters. Then voluntary adoption agencies; Families for Children and PACT – parents and children together, attend the regular 'Children Waiting Meetings' to promote prompt matching of children with prospective adoptive families.

Function	Regional Adoption Agency	Local Authority
<b>RECRUITMENT AND ASSESSMENT</b>		
Marketing and Recruitment Strategy	✓	
Adopter Recruitment and Enquiries	✓	
Assessment of Prospective Adopters – all Stage One and Stage Two functions	✓	
Completion of Prospective Adopter Report	✓	
Agency Decision Maker for approval of adopters	✓	
Post approval training	✓	
Matching	✓	
Post Placement training for Prospective Adopters	✓	
<b>PERMANANCE PLANNING</b>		
Early identification of a child possibly requiring adoption		✓
Tracking and monitoring the child possibly requiring adoption	✓	✓
Support and advice to child care social worker on the adoption process	✓	✓
Sibling or other specialist assessments if commissioned by LA	✓	
Direct work to prepare child prior to placement	✓	
Preparation of the Child Permanence Report		✓
Agency Decision Maker for “Should be placed for Adoption” decisions		✓
Case management prior to the point agreed by the LA ADM		✓
Case management from point agreed by the LA ADM	✓	
<b>MATCHING AND PLACEMENT</b>		
Family finding	✓	
Looked After Child reviews	✓	✓
Shortlist and visit potential families	✓	
Organising child appreciation day	✓	
Ongoing direct work to prepare child prior to placement	✓	
Adoption Panel administration and management	✓	
Agency adviser role	✓	
Agency Decision Maker for Matching prospective adopters and child	✓	
Placement Planning meeting administration and management of introductions	✓	
Support to family post placement and planning and delivery of adoption support	✓	

Ongoing life story work and preparation of Life story book	✓	
Independent Review Officer monitoring of quality of child's care and care plan		✓
Support prospective adopters in preparation and submission of application for Adoption Order – including attending at court	✓	
Preparation of later life letter	✓	
<b>ADOPTION AND SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP SUPPORT</b>		
Assessment for adoption or special guardianship support	✓	
Developing and delivering adoption and special guardianship support plans	✓	
Agree and administer financial support to adoptive families pre and post Adoption Order		✓
Adoption and special guardianship support delivery including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support groups</li> <li>• Social events</li> <li>• Post adoption/special guardianship training</li> <li>• Independent Birth Relative services</li> <li>• Support with ongoing birth relative contact</li> <li>• Specialist Life Story practitioners</li> <li>• Adoption counselling and training</li> </ul>	✓	
Financial support to adopters and special guardians including adoption and special guardianship allowances		✓
<b>SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP ORDERS</b>		
Receipt of application or court request for special guardianship		✓
Assessment of applicants for Special Guardianship	✓	
<b>NON-AGENCY ADOPTIONS</b>		
Step parent/partner adoption assessments	✓	
Intercountry adoption assessments and post approval and post order support	✓	



## **Aspire Adoption Panel**

Aspire Adoption operates an Adoption Panel, constituted in accordance with legislation, regulations and guidance. The panel has an independent chairperson, 15 members on a Central List from which each panel is drawn and two medical advisers who share the Panel attendance. There is no legal maximum number of panel members at each panel but in practice, usually a maximum of six attend each panel. To be quorate, the panel needs to have a minimum of five members present, which must include the chair or vice chair, an independent person (who could be the chair or vice chair) and a social worker. One of the agency medical advisers for the two local authorities attends the Aspire Adoption Panel where possible and is a full member of the panel when they do so. The panel is serviced by a panel administrator and has access to legal advice if needed. The professional advice to the panel is provided by the two Permanence Coordinators/Agency Advisers, one of whom will attend each Panel to ensure the smooth running and to advise on policies and procedures.

Current membership includes adopters and adopted adults with personal experience of adoption. It also includes experienced social workers with direct experience of adoption work, a psychotherapist with experience of working in a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services setting, a former magistrate, and a social worker with experience as a CAFCASS guardian. The Central List reflects the diversity of modern society, with some panel members in a same sex or heterosexual relationship, others who are single with experience of bringing up children as single parents. Most of those on the Central List are white British, with two panel members who are from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) background. One panel member has a registered disability, another has a relative with Down's Syndrome. There are more women than men on the Central List, with proactive efforts being made to recruit more men.

The functions of the panel in relation to adoption matters are

- to recommend whether prospective adopters are suitable to adopt a child;
- to recommend whether a proposed match between a child and prospective adopters is a suitable one.
- In circumstances where a child is relinquished for adoption and no Placement Order is applied for, the panel will recommend whether the child should be placed for adoption.

The panel can also give advice about the numbers and ages of children in relation to prospective adopter approval, also about post adoption contact, delegated parental responsibility and adoption support. The panel has a consultative role regarding the agency's policies and procedures, and a monitoring role regarding quality assurance and ensuring that the time scales set out in the Adoption & Children Act 2002 are met.

The Aspire Adoption Panel makes recommendations based on detailed written reports prepared by the child's social worker and adoption social worker, and the social worker's attendance at panel to clarify details if needed. When considering the approval or deregistration of prospective adopters or a match between prospective adopters and a child, adoptive applicants have the option of attending panel in person, to provide scope to discuss and expand on any issues relevant to the application. Applicants who decide not to attend in person are not disadvantaged in any way and no judgement is made from their decision not to do so, although every effort will be made to assist their attendance.

The venue of the panel meeting is in a modern purpose -built building with disabled access. During the period since March 2020, in response to the Coronavirus restrictions, Aspire Panel has met virtually using Microsoft Teams.

The recommendations and advice of the panel are referred, along with the final agreed minutes of the meeting, to the relevant Agency Decision Maker, for a decision to be made and conveyed to all parties within the time scales laid down in the Adoption & Children Act 2002.

### **Systems for the monitoring, quality assurance and evaluation of services**

The Aspire Adoption Service undergoes regular internal and external scrutiny to ensure that services are robust and of good quality. This will be achieved by:

- Collection and scrutiny of data, recording outcomes for children and adopters, including data as required by the Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board and Ofsted.
- Tracking systems, internally and in conjunction with the local authorities, to measure the timescales involved in providing services.
- Aspire Adoption's Operational Management Board meets quarterly and reviews outcomes against key performance indicators and national standards. It also reviews budgets and the financial state of the agency. The Board consists of representatives from both local authorities

at Service Director and Service Manager level. Others attend by invitation, and there is a standard Focus on Practice agenda item at each meeting.

- The Aspire Strategic Partnership Board meets every 3 months, and membership consists of the Executive Corporate Directors in BCP Council and Dorset Council, and the lead members/portfolio holders for Children and Families representing elected members. A representative of the CCG attends, also the panel chair, a service user representative and the Chief Executive of the Voluntary Adoption Agency with which Aspire is partnered, Families for Children, who is also the chair. The role of the Board is to oversee and review the service from a performance and financial perspective, also, to attempt to resolve disputes between the Councils under the terms of the Inter Authority Agreement.
- The Permanence Coordinators/Agency Advisers and the Aspire Adoption Panel chair provide quality assurance feedback every six months on the quality of reports being presented to the panel. This includes whether the requirements of the Restrictions on the Preparation of Adoption Reports Regulations 2005 have been met, and whether there is a thorough, rigorous, consistent and fair approach across the service in the assessment of whether a child should be placed for adoption, the suitability of prospective adopters and the proposed placement.
- Six monthly performance reports are provided by the Aspire Adoption Service Manager to the Aspire Strategic Partnership Board and to the executive officers of each Council. The local authorities still retain corporate responsibility for their own Looked After Children, even where they have delegated functions to Aspire. These reports address the management, outcomes and financial state of the agency, and monitor the management and outcomes of the service, to satisfy the local authorities delegating adoption functions to Aspire that the agency is effective, achieving good outcomes for children and other service users, and complying with the conditions of registration.
- Each team has regular team meetings and there are staff meetings for all of those working in Aspire every 4 months, to analyse performance across the service and take part in practice development sessions.
- Service user feedback is sought at different stages of the adoption process, and in relation to special guardianship services.
- A Service User Consultative Forum meets every 3-4 months to feedback to the agency on specific issues. The chairperson of the Forum sits on the Strategic Partnership Board.
- Second opinion visits to prospective adopters take place where there are issues arising during the assessment.

- Statutory Child in Care reviews, chaired by Independent Reviewing Officers, and planning meetings provide a structure for the agency to record progress in individual cases where a child is looked after by either of the local authorities.
- Where Aspire has case responsibility for children with adoption plans, the local authority audit schedule includes these cases. Aspire has also set up an audit schedule to audit a sample of cases in each of the four teams on a rolling monthly basis, with feedback to the case holder, team manager and Aspire Service Manager. Themes from the audits are drawn together every 3 months by the Permanence Coordinators/Agency Advisers.
- Staff performance is routinely monitored during regular supervision sessions and appraisals with line managers.
- Appraisals for Aspire Adoption Panel members, including the chair take place annually.
- Annual updates take place of the *Statement of Purpose* and *Children's Guides to Adoption* and *Children's Guide to Adoption Support*.

#### Complaints and compliments

All of those receiving a service in relation to adoption or special guardianship by Aspire Adoption are advised of their right to make representations or complaints.

The complaints officer for Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole (BCP) Council collates and progresses all complaints and compliments according to Local Authority procedures and produces reports on an annual basis. The Aspire Adoption Service Manager monitors the progress of all complaints and compliments specifically relating to the service. There is a protocol in place which defines how complaints are managed which are received by or about the services provided by staff in Aspire's partner local authorities. Details of this can be found in one of the Schedules to the Inter Authority Agreement, attached as Appendix D.

*A Children's Guide to Adoption* is given to all children where the decision has been made that they should be placed for adoption. This contains local information about adoption, a summary of what happens at each stage of the adoption process, including at court, how long each stage should take, how a child can find out about their rights, how to contact their Independent Reviewing Officer, how to secure access to an independent advocate, how to make a complaint and how to contact the Children's Rights Officer and Ofsted.

*A Children's Guide to Adoption Support Services* is given to all children at the time of placement dependent on age and understanding and those in receipt of adoption support services, and contains the information laid down in the Minimum Standards about how a child can find out about their rights, how they can contact their Independent Reviewing Officer, the Children's Rights Director, Ofsted, if they wish to raise a concern with inspectors and how to secure access to an independent advocate.

#### Contact details for Aspire Adoption

Aspire Adoption,  
First Floor,  
Kinson Hub,  
1599 Wimborne Road,  
Bournemouth BH11 9AW

Tel - 0300 123 9868

Email - [enquiries@aspireadoption.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@aspireadoption.co.uk)

#### Contact details for complaints

Tel 01202 458712

[acomplaint@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:acomplaint@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

Freepost RTKS-LEBR-YTAR

W. BCPCouncil.gov.uk/complaints

#### Contact details for Ofsted

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester

M1 2WD

Email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

General enquiries 0300 123 1231

Contact form <https://contact.ofsted>.

Contact Ofsted about concerns on 0300 123 4666

The helpline is open Monday to Friday from 8.00am to 6.00pm.

## **Appendix A**

The values statement below is adapted from the 2011 and 2014 National Minimum Standards for Adoption and reflects those of Aspire Adoption.

### **Values - children**

- The child's welfare, safety & needs are at the centre of the adoption process
- Adopted children should have an enjoyable childhood, & benefit from excellent parenting & education, enjoying a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents & skills leading to a successful adult life.
- Children are entitled to grow up as part of a loving family which can meet their needs during childhood and beyond.
- Children's wishes & feelings are important & will be actively sought & fully taken into account at all stages of the adoption process.
- Delays should be avoided as they can have a severe impact on the health & development of the children waiting to be adopted.
- A sense of identity is important to a child's well-being. To help children develop this, their ethnic origin, cultural background, religion, language & sexuality need to be properly recognised & positively valued & promoted.
- The particular needs of disabled children & children with complex needs will be fully recognised & taken into account.
- Where a child cannot be cared for in a suitable manner in their own country, intercountry adoption may be considered as an alternative means of providing a permanent family.
- Children, birth parents/guardians & families & adoptive parents will be valued & respected.
- A genuine partnership between all those involved in adoption is essential for the National Minimum Standards to deliver the best outcomes for children; this includes the Government, local government, other statutory agencies, Voluntary Adoption Agencies & Adoption Support Agencies.

### **Values- adopted adults & birth relatives**

- Adoption is an evolving life-long process for all those involved- adopted adults, & birth & adoptive relatives. The fundamental issues raised by adoption may reverberate & resurface at different times & stages throughout an individual's life.
- Adopted people should have access to information & services to enable them to address adoption related matters throughout their life.
- Agencies have a duty to provide services that consider the welfare of all parties involved & should consider the implications of decisions & actions for everyone involved.

- Agencies should seek to work in partnership with all parties involved, taking account of their views & wishes in decision making.
- Agencies should acknowledge differences in people's circumstances & have established policies that provide non-discriminatory services.
- Adopted adults have their adoptive identity safeguarded & the right to decide whether to be involved in contact or communication with birth family members.

**Values - adopters**

- The role of adoptive parents in offering a permanent family to a child will be valued and respected.
- All adoptive applicants will be treated fairly, openly and with respect throughout the adoption process. No applicant will be discriminated against on grounds of disability, ethnicity, culture, language, sexuality, gender, financial status or marital status.
- All applicants are entitled to know what issues will be considered in their assessment and will be kept informed of progress throughout. They will receive a copy of their assessment report before an adoption panel meeting, have the opportunity to comment on the report and to attend panel and be heard if they wish.

## Appendix B

### Schedule of Responsibilities

The successful delivery of the services provided by Aspire will be dependent on a high level of joint working between Aspire and Aspire's partner local authorities of Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole. This document summarises respective roles and responsibilities, to ensure that all the agencies work together effectively in the best interests of children and families touched by or created through adoption or special guardianship.

### **Aspire Adoption, Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset County Council, and the Borough of Poole**

This document summarises the respective roles and responsibilities between Aspire Adoption and partner local authorities which are Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and Dorset Council regarding the delivery of adoption and special guardianship services.

#### **The Vision**

Aspire's vision is to achieve excellent outcomes for children and adults whose lives have been touched by adoption and special guardianship by:

- Working closely with our partner local authorities and other stakeholders to ensure that children's best interests are at the heart of placement decisions which will fully meet their needs.
- Targeted recruitment and establishment of a wide and diverse pool of prospective adopters.
- Matching so that children are placed without delay in secure, loving families.
- Undertaking special guardianship assessments which are thorough, evidence based, and timely.
- Providing creative and outstanding adoption and special guardianship support services.
- Investing in our workforce to ensure they have the right skills and capacity to deliver excellent services.
- Continually seeking to apply best practice and innovation to our ways of working.
- Actively listening to and learning from children, adults and staff with whom we work to develop and improve the services provided.



### **Summary of roles and responsibilities**

The successful delivery of the services provided by Aspire will be dependent on a high level of joint working between Aspire and Aspire’s partner local authorities which are Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and Dorset Council. This document summarises respective roles and responsibilities, to ensure that all the agencies work together effectively in the best interests of children and families touched by or created through adoption or special guardianship.

### **THE CHILD**

<b>SERVICE AREA</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>Case responsibility</b>	The local authority will take primary casework responsibility for all children for whom adoption or special guardianship is being considered to the point of Care and Placement Orders. In the case of relinquished babies, the local authority will take primary casework responsibility until the formal witnessed CAFCASS consent has been obtained.	Aspire will provide specialist advice and support to help the local authority workers to understand the adoption process, influencing and promoting best practice. This will be via the Permanence Coordinator/Agency Adviser and allocated Aspire social worker and support worker.	
	The Agency Decision Maker (ADM) in each local authority may make a decision, at the time of making a Should Be Placed for Adoption (SBPFA) decision about a particular child, as to the point of transfer of case responsibility for that child to Aspire. For the majority of children, this will be at the point of Placement Order or formal witnessed CAFCASS consent.	Aspire will take primary casework responsibility for all children for whom the ADM in that child’s authority has decided that the case should transfer to the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA). For those children not transferring to Aspire, the role of the Aspire workers will be primarily family finding and providing specialist support and advice via the allocated workers and the Permanence Coordinator/Agency Adviser.	The funding formula used to establish the Aspire budget has been calculated on 100% of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council’s children transferring to Aspire at the point of Placement Order and 20% of Dorset children. If the proportion of Dorset children transferring in to

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE	NOTES
			Aspire exceeds that percentage, additional funding will be required.
<b>Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO)s</b>	Where a child is Looked After, the IRO in the local authority will remain responsible for monitoring and overseeing the child's care plan to the point of an Adoption Order or Special Guardianship Order regardless of whether case responsibility has transferred to Aspire or not.		
<b>Early identification of children with adoption plans</b>	The local authority is responsible for care planning and for identifying the children who may require an adoptive family, and of then notifying the Aspire Permanence Coordinator/Agency Adviser at the earliest possible stage. For some children, this will be pre-birth.	Aspire will provide support to the local authority in the care planning process via the Permanence Coordinator/Agency Adviser. Aspire will allocate a social worker and support worker from the Family Finding and Placement team within 48 hours of notification by the local authority of a child with a possible adoption plan.	
	The local authority will keep the Aspire Permanence Coordinator/Agency Adviser informed of progress in care planning and will invite the Permanence Coordinator to relevant meetings such as legal gateway meetings, permanency planning meetings, and tracking meetings where adoption is being considered for a child.	The Permanence Coordinator/Agency Adviser will attend relevant local authority planning meetings about a child where adoption is being considered. The allocated Aspire social worker or support worker will draft a profile of the child and begin to identify suitable adopters as early as possible.	
<b>Early Permanence</b>	The local authority will consider whether an Early Permanent (Fostering for Adoption) placement	The Aspire Permanence Coordinator/Agency Adviser and the	

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE	NOTES
	<p>would be appropriate for any child for whom they are considering adoption, in line with Section 22c (9B) (c) of the Children Act 1989.</p> <p>If so, they will notify the Aspire Permanence Coordinator/Agency Adviser and the allocated Aspire family finding social worker.</p>	<p>allocated Aspire social worker will provide advice and support to the local authority in identifying which children are suitable to be considered for an Early Permanent (EP) placement.</p>	
		<p>Where available, a suitable family able to provide an Early Permanent placement will be offered to the local authority for a named child, with ongoing support to the carers.</p>	<p>In recruiting, assessing and preparing prospective adopters, Aspire will encourage those applying to adopt to positively consider the benefits for the child of Early Permanence.</p>
	<p>The local authority social worker will prepare the relevant paperwork for the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) in the child's authority to agree to a placement under Regulation 25a of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010.</p> <p>They will also progress this paperwork to the ADM in the child's local authority via the Aspire Permanence Coordinator for consideration and will be responsible for any formal notifications to their fostering service, the prospective foster carers/adopters, birth parents and court.</p>	<p>The Permanence Coordinator/Agency Adviser and allocated family finding social worker will support and assist the local authority social worker in completing the relevant paperwork for the ADM decision under Reg 25a. The Aspire Permanence Coordinator/Agency Adviser has responsibility for the quality assurance of reports to the ADM.</p>	
	<p>The local authority social worker will set up all payments to the prospective adopters/foster</p>		

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE	NOTES
	carers whilst the placement remains an Early Permanent one.		
<b>Tracking</b>	The local authority will continue to maintain tracking systems in relation to all children in care proceedings or accommodated under Section 20 of the 1989 Children Act.	Aspire will maintain tracking systems for all children notified to them by the local authority with a plan for adoption or for whom initial information suggests that adoption may become the plan (children in the pipeline) for that child. Aspire will also maintain tracking systems of all children in placement up to the Adoption Order and tracking systems of assessments and prospective adopters approved and either waiting or with a child in placement.	
<b>Adoption Medicals</b>	The local authority social worker will be responsible for obtaining completed CoramBAAF M and B reports (Obstetric and Neo Natal Reports), CoramBAAF PH reports (reports on the birth parents' current and family health history) and liaising with the Agency Medical Adviser to arrange the Adoption Medical. The child's social worker should arrange with the foster carer to take the child to the medical and should also attend in person.		
<b>Completion of Adoption Reports</b>	The local authority social worker will be responsible for the completion of the Child Permanence Report (CPR) for the Agency Decision as to whether a child should be placed for	The Aspire family finding social worker will support and assist the local authority social worker in the completion of the CPR for the agency decision.	It will be necessary for the local authority worker and Aspire worker to work closely

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE	NOTES
	<p>adoption. They will also be responsible for updating the CPR following the making of Care and Placement Orders, prior to any transfer of primary responsibility for the child to Aspire.</p> <p>The line manager of the allocated social worker is responsible for reading and signing off the CPR prior to submission to the Aspire Permanence Coordinator/Agency Adviser.</p> <p>The local authority social worker will be responsible for updating the CPR eg for matching if case responsibility remains with the local authority.</p>	<p>The Permanence Coordinator, in their role of Agency Adviser, will be responsible for the QA of all reports being presented to the local authority or Aspire ADM, and it is for them alone to decide whether the report is adequate for submission to the panel and to the ADM. The Aspire family finding social worker will be responsible for updating the CPR e.g. for matching, if case responsibility for the child is transferred to Aspire post Placement Order.</p>	<p>and collaboratively to ensure that all relevant information is included in the CPR and that the report is of a high standard.</p> <p>Cases will not be transferred into Aspire until the Case Management System (CMS) is up to date and the CPR has been updated.</p>
	<p>The local authority social worker will be responsible for completing a draft support plan for the child at the point of ADM decision (SBPFA) based on the assessed needs of the child in line with the Adoption Support Services Regulations 2005, and for obtaining 'in principle' agreement from the child's local authority to any financial support post placement. This plan will be reviewed and updated as further information becomes available about the child's needs.</p>		
	<p>If casework responsibility has not been transferred to Aspire at the point of Placement Order, the local authority social worker will collaborate with the Aspire social worker in reading Prospective Adopters' Reports (PARs), shortlisting and visiting potential families as soon as legally possible.</p>	<p>The Aspire social worker will lead on identifying potential adoptive families and will shortlist and visit potential families as a priority as soon as legally possible.</p>	

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE	NOTES
		<p>If casework responsibility has not been transferred to Aspire at the point of the Placement Order, the Aspire worker will collaborate with the local authority social worker in shortlisting PARs and visiting potential families as soon as legally possible.</p>	
	<p>The local authority social worker will be responsible for obtaining agreement, prior to the matching panel, from the child's local authority to any financial support identified for the placement and included in the support plan, if casework responsibility has not transferred to Aspire.</p> <p>This should include any one off or setting up costs specific to the proposed placement, any ongoing financial support in the form of an adoption allowance, the cost of accommodation for prospective adopters who live too far to travel on a daily basis for introductions, the cost for the submission of the adoption application to court and any costs in relation to the management of direct contact.</p>	<p>The Aspire social worker will be responsible for obtaining agreement, prior to the matching panel, from the child's local authority to any financial support identified for the placement and included in the support plan, if casework responsibility has transferred to Aspire.</p> <p>This should include any one off or setting up costs specific to the proposed placement, any ongoing financial support in the form of an adoption allowance, the cost of accommodation for prospective adopters who live too far to travel on a daily basis for introductions, and the cost for the submission of the adoption application to court and any costs in relation to the management of direct contact.</p>	<p>The ADM in each local authority will need to agree to any financial support included in the support plan, or to delegate responsibility for that decision to a budget holding senior manager within the local authority.</p> <p>The funding of any finance to support an adoption placement, whether a one-off payment or ongoing payments remains the responsibility of the child's local authority.</p>
<b>Direct work with children</b>	<p>The local authority social worker is responsible for all statutory duties and direct work with the child in relation to permanency planning and care proceedings.</p>	<p>The allocated Aspire family finding social worker and support worker will advise and support the local authority social worker in planning any direct work with</p>	

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE	NOTES
		the child, to ensure that they understand why they are in care and the court process (dependent on their age and understanding).	
	Post Placement Order, if the primary responsibility for the child has not transferred to Aspire, the local authority social worker will undertake all stat visits and all direct work with the child, to prepare them for placement, with advice and support from the Aspire social worker and family support practitioner.	Post Placement Order, if the primary responsibility for the child has transferred to Aspire, the allocated Aspire social worker will undertake all stat visits and the Aspire social worker and Aspire family support practitioner will take responsibility for all direct work with the child, including life story work, to prepare them for placement.	
<b>Life story book</b>		The Aspire support worker will prepare the life story book for all children moving to an adoptive placement. The first draft will be handed to the prospective adopters at the latest by the second review with the final version being handed over within 10 days of the Adoption Hearing. An electronic version of the life story book will be made available to adopters as well as a paper copy.	
<b>Later life letter</b>	If casework responsibility is being transferred to Aspire, the local authority social worker will complete the first part of the later life letter prior to transfer.	If casework responsibility is transferred to Aspire at the point of Placement Order, the allocated Aspire worker will complete the later life letter and handing it to the	

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE	NOTES
	If casework responsibility is not being transferred to Aspire at the point of Placement Order, the local authority social worker will be responsible for completing the later life letter and handing it to the adopters within 10 days of the Adoption Hearing.	adopters within 10 days of the Adoption Hearing.	
<b>Adoption Panel</b>	There are no Adoption Panels remaining in the local authorities. For quoracy, Adoption Panels require the attendance of a social worker as a member of the Panel. Social workers from the local authorities are welcome to approach the Agency Advisers if they are interested in becoming a panel member and should talk with their line manager in the first instance.	Aspire will take on all responsibility for the setting up and running of an Adoption Panel to consider the suitability of prospective adopters, matches between prospective adopters and children, and whether adoption should be the plan for the child in the case of a relinquished baby where there are no court proceedings to scrutinise the planning for the child. Aspire will appoint a Panel chair and maintain a Central List to ensure that at all times the Aspire Adoption Panel is set up and run in accordance with regulations and guidance and that it is quorate for all meetings. Aspire will take responsibility for the minuting of all panels and for the distribution and storing of those minutes securely.	
<b>Agency Adviser</b>	There will be no Agency Adviser post in the local authorities.	The Aspire Permanence Coordinator is a combined role with that of Agency Adviser. The Permanence Coordinator/Agency Adviser will act as the Agency Adviser to the ADM in both	



SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE	NOTES
		local authorities in relation to SBPFA decisions and matches, and to the Aspire ADM in respect of approvals and as Agency Adviser to the Aspire Adoption Panel, with responsibility for the QA of all reports being presented to the local authority or Aspire ADMs. It is for them alone to decide whether the report is adequate for submission to the panel and to the ADM.	
<b>Panel Administrator</b>	There will be no post of panel administrator within the 3 local authorities.	Aspire will be responsible for providing business support in the role of panel administrator to service the Aspire Adoption Panel.	
<b>Formal notifications following ADM decisions</b>	The local authority will take responsibility for informing birth parents of SBPFA decisions, within statutory timescales.	Aspire will be responsible for the written notification of birth parents in relation to BCP SBPA decisions and the referral to the independent birth parent service. Aspire will be responsible for informing prospective adopters of ADM decisions re their suitability as adopters. Aspire will also be responsible for informing birth parents and prospective adopters of matches agreed by the Aspire ADM.	
<b>Formal notifications prior to the</b>		Regardless of whether casework responsibility transfers to Aspire at Placement Order, the Aspire panel administrator will take responsibility for	

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE	NOTES
<b>placement of a child</b>		sending out formal notifications of a child's placement in advance of that placement to health, education and to the local authority where the child will be living post placement.	
<b>Access to child's CMS</b>	The local authority will provide access to an individual child's record in their CMS to the Aspire Permanence Coordinator/Agency Adviser and the allocated Aspire social worker, support worker, their business support worker and team manager, for any children for whom adoption is likely to be the plan.	Aspire workers will record all activity in relation to the child on the child's CMS.	Case recording will be completed within the timescales of each local authority's policies and procedures.

### ADOPTER RECRUITMENT

	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE	NOTES
<b>Adoption enquiries</b>	The local authority will ensure that the Council website contains information about Aspire and a weblink to the Aspire website. The local authority will signpost any adoption enquiries which are in scope for Aspire, including enquiries about adopter recruitment, whether domestic or intercountry, adoption and special guardianship support, and partner (step-parent) adoptions to Aspire, within 24 hours.	Aspire will maintain a website giving general information about adoption and special guardianship and outlining the services which Aspire provides. The website will have clear contact details including a dedicated telephone number and an email contact address. Within office hours, a duty worker will be available to respond directly to enquiries from other professionals and from members of the public.	
<b>Pre-assessment stage</b>		Aspire will hold regular information events for prospective adopters at	

	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
		geographic locations across the Aspire region.	
<b>Stage One</b>	The local authority will provide all information required for statutory checks of prospective adopters currently resident in the local authority or previously resident in the local authority within 15 working days.	Aspire will carry out all stage 1 functions, including running the preparation course for prospective adopters.	
<b>Stage Two</b>		Aspire will carry out all stage 2 functions and be responsible for the preparation of the Prospective Adopter's Report.	
<b>Approval of suitability</b>		The Aspire Adoption Panel will consider the suitability of prospective adopters and the Aspire ADM will make the decision. Aspire will be responsible for all formal notifications to the prospective adopters of suitability, including where prospective adopters are not seen as suitable. Aspire will have responsibility for appeals against qualifying determinations and for any case referred to the IRM.	

### **POST ADOPTION SUPPORT SERVICES**

	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>Adoption support</b>	The local authority will signpost enquiries and referrals for adoption support to Aspire within 24 hours.	Aspire will maintain a daily duty service to ensure that all of those making an enquiry about adoption support or requesting an adoption support	

	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
	This might be an adoptive family in need of support, an adopted adult, or a birth relative.	assessment are responded to within 24 hours.	
	If the primary reason for the referral is that the child is at risk of significant harm and/or the child is on the edge of care, the local authority will retain primary responsibility for the case, to undertake S47 enquiries and allocate a social worker where LSCB thresholds are met.	<p>Aspire will provide core adoption support to the family in the form of newsletters, invitation to support groups, and access to Aspire's therapeutic support services including clinical psychology support. The following are the core services on offer to all adoptive families for whom Aspire, undertaking the function as a delegated function from the local authority, is responsible for offering services to-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Telephone or email advice and information services;</li> <li>Liaison, short-term counselling, assessment and social work or support worker support, referral to in house clinical psychology or other specialist services if appropriate;</li> <li>Access to training, workshops support groups for adopters and adopted children;</li> <li>Access to and information about resources such as DVDs, books and specialist services;</li> <li>Opportunities for networking with other adoptive families, including social events for adoptive families;</li> </ul>	

	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
		Agency updates for adoptive families, e.g. newsletters and other communications whether digital or paper.	
<b>Out-of-hours services</b>	Adoptive families will have the same access to the Dorset, or Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Out of Hours service, as other families living in the area.	Aspire will operate a daily duty service within office hours but will not operate an Aspire Out of Hours service.	
<b>Indirect/ letterbox contact</b>		Aspire will operate the indirect exchange of information between birth families and adoptive families including arrangements set up before July 2017.	
<b>Supervised direct contact</b>	The local authorities will remain responsible for funding any direct post adoption contact arrangements agreed prior to July 2017 but can delegate the responsibility to Aspire to supervise those arrangements in individual cases, if the funding is provided by the local authority for Aspire to do so. Arrangements for direct post adoption contact made after July 2017 should form part of the adoption support plan at the time of matching, with the funding for these arrangements agreed by the local authority prior to presentation to the Aspire Adoption Panel for matching.	Responsibility for the management of direct post adoption contact arrangements set up after July 2017, provided that the funding has been agreed at the time of matching. Aspire will supervise direct post adoption contact arrangements made before July 2017 if the funding is provided.	
<b>Adoption allowances and other financial support to</b>	The agreement to, means testing, administration, payment and review of adoption allowances or other financial support to adoptive families, including costs incurred in managing direct contact		Harmonisation of adoption and special guardianship allowances across the local authorities will be

	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>adoptive families</b>	<p>arrangements will remain the responsibility of the relevant local authority.</p> <p>The local authority will be responsible for setting up costs and for costs incurred during introductions between a child and prospective adopters, including the costs of providing accommodation if the prospective adopters live too far from the foster carers to travel daily, if agreed by the local authority as part of the support plan at the time of matching.</p> <p>The local authority will remain responsible for the costs of lodging adoption applications.</p>		undertaken at some future point.
<b>Adoption Support Fund</b>	<p>The pan Dorset therapeutic provider list will continue to be maintained by Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole Council (BCP) as host authority. Any new providers will be checked out by the BCP Access to Resources (ART) team, prior to their addition to the list.</p> <p>The ART team will also set up and monitor contracts to providers of services funded by the Adoption Support Fund (ASF).</p>	Aspire is responsible for all applications to the Adoption Support Fund, based on assessments of need undertaken by Aspire social workers.	
<b>Independent support to birth parents</b>	<p>The local authority will include details of the independent birth relative support service (Birth Family Matters) in their formal letter to birth parents notifying them of an ADM decision that their child should be placed for adoption.</p> <p>It will be an opt out approach i.e. birth parents will be contacted if they do not inform Aspire within 4</p>	Aspire commissions an independent birth relative support service (Birth Family Matters) from Families for Children. The panel administrator will refer all birth parents who have not opted out of contact with the BFM services following an SBPFA decision to the service.	<p>The Birth Family Matters (BFM) service is a support, advice and counselling service.</p> <p>It is not an advocacy service.</p>

	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
	<p>weeks that they do not wish to be contacted by the BFM worker.</p> <p>A copy of the letter will be sent to the Aspire Permanence Coordinator/Agency Adviser</p>	<p>The panel administrator will refer all birth parents who have not opted out of contact with the BFM worker following a match.</p> <p>The BFM worker will contact all birth parents who do not opt out and any other birth relatives who self- refer or who are referred by other professionals, to offer support, advice and counselling.</p>	<p>The BFM service will be funded from the Aspire base budget and is not an additional charge to the local authority.</p>
<b>Birth Records Counselling and intermediary services</b>	<p>All requests received by the local authority via the General Register Office or directly from a service user, for access to birth and adoption records, will be signposted by the local authority to Aspire within 24 hours, as will requests by adopted adults for counselling, advice and support or for intermediary services.</p> <p>Requests for independent support from birth parents or other relatives received by the local authority pre or post Adoption Order and including requests for support from birth relatives whose children were adopted in the 1950s, 1960s or 1970s, will be signposted to Aspire within 24 hours.</p>	<p>Information about access to records and services for adopted adults and birth relatives will be available on the Aspire website, with links to relevant organisations.</p> <p>The daily duty worker will respond to all referrals, via the General Register Office or directly from a service user, for access to birth and adoption records, within 1 working day.</p> <p>The daily duty worker will respond to all requests by adopted adults or birth relatives for counselling, advice and support or for intermediary services within 24 hours.</p>	
		<p>Aspire will not offer a tracing service unless in exceptional circumstances e.g. terminal or hereditary illness. Service users will be given advice and information about tracing and</p>	

	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
		signposted to Adoption Support Agencies who undertake tracing services.	
<b>Intermediary services</b>	All requests by adopted adults or birth relatives for intermediary services to establish contact with their birth relative will be signposted by the local authority to Aspire within 24 hours.	All requests by adopted adults or birth relatives for intermediary services to establish contact with their birth relative will be responded to by the duty worker in Aspire within 24 hours.	
		Aspire will offer support and advice but will not offer a tracing service unless in exceptional circumstances e.g. terminal or hereditary illness. Service users will be given advice and information about tracing and signposted to Adoption Support Agencies who undertake tracing services.	

### **NON-AGENCY PLACEMENTS**

	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>Partner (step-parent) adoptions</b>	All enquiries about partner (step-parent) adoptions and all formal notifications of intent to adopt in such cases which are received by the local authority will be signposted to Aspire within 24 hours.	Information about partner adoptions will be available on the Aspire website, with links to relevant organisations. The daily duty worker will respond to all enquiries and referrals about partner adoptions within 24 hours.	
	The local authority will respond to requests, from Aspire or other local authorities or Regional Adoption Agencies, for local authority statutory checks on those living in their area who have	Aspire will be responsible for the formal written response to notifications of intent to adopt in partner adoption applications. Aspire will allocate a social	



	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
	applied to adopt, including in respect of non - agency placements, will be responded to within 15 working days.	worker to counsel and advise the family, and to complete the Annex A report for court if an application is lodged.	
	If legal advice or support at the court hearing is required, the local authority legal team where the child and family live will be responsible for providing advice to or support to the Aspire social worker at the court hearing if this is required.	The allocated Aspire social worker will be responsible for attending all court hearings in relation to the application.	
<b>Intercountry adoption</b>	All enquiries from prospective adopters about intercountry adoption received by the local authority will be signposted to Aspire within 24 hours.	Information about intercountry adoption will be available on the Aspire website, with links to relevant organisations. The daily duty worker will respond to all referrals about intercountry adoption within 24 hours.	Local authorities will need to identify who in the local authority will respond to these requests in a timely way, as currently these are undertaken by their adoption team staff.
		Aspire will be responsible for all intercountry adoption assessments, preparation and support for prospective adopters living in the geographic area of the 3 local authorities of Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole.	
		The Aspire Adoption Panel will consider all applications for suitability to adopt from overseas and the Aspire ADM will make the Agency Decision.	

**DATA COLLATION AND SUBMISSION, FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS AND COMPLAINTS**

	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
Data collation and reporting	The local authority will retain responsibility for collating and reporting internally and to external bodies such as the Department for Education, Ofsted and the Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board on information about children in need and children in care. If Aspire has primary responsibility for a child, the Case Management System (CMS) in the child's authority will be the CMS for the Aspire social worker to record any information relating to the child. This will enable reports to be run by the child's local authority from their own CMS.	Aspire will take responsibility for collating and reporting, internally and to external bodies such as the Department for Education, Ofsted and Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board on information about prospective adopters, adopters, adoption support. If Aspire has primary responsibility for a child, the Case Management System (CMS) in the child's authority will be the CMS for the Aspire social worker to record any information relating to the child. This will enable reports to be run by the child's local authority from their own CMS.	
	The local authorities will identify the data they require Aspire to produce in order to fulfil their own responsibilities in relation to children in care, including those with adoption plans.	Aspire will be responsible for producing the Annual Adoption Report for each local authority in relation to adoption services within their area. This will be presented to the Aspire Management Board and to the relevant Council Boards.	
Freedom of Information requests	The local authority will be responsible for responding to any Freedom of Information requests relating to care planning for children and data about ADM decisions, Placement Orders and	Aspire will be responsible for responding to any Freedom of Information requests relating to adoption assessments and adoption support.	Where a request relates to both the local authority and Aspire, an agreement will have to be reached

	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
	Adoption or Special Guardianship Orders made in respect of children who are or were in their care.		on a case by case basis as to who is best placed to collate and respond to the request.
Complaints	The local authority will be responsible for all complaints received in relation to the child, to the point of transfer of case responsibility to Aspire.	Aspire will be responsible for all complaints relating to prospective adopters and adopters, children post transfer of case responsibility to Aspire, adopted adults, letterbox.	
	Where a complaint relates to services pre and post transfer of case responsibility to Aspire, a decision will be made following consultation with the complaints officer in the child's authority as to how to manage the complaint and as to who will take responsibility for investigating the complaint and for funding any stage 2 and stage 3 investigations.	Where a complaint relates to services pre and post transfer of case responsibility to Aspire, a decision will be made following consultation with the complaints officer in the child's authority as to how to manage the complaint and as to who will take responsibility for investigating the complaint and for funding any stage 2 and stage 3 investigations.	

### **SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP**

	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>Special guardianship in care proceedings</b>	The primary responsibility for the child remains with the local authority in respect of permanency planning, court proceedings, parenting assessments, and viability assessments of family or friends.	Following a positive viability assessment of a family member or friend and referral into Aspire, a social worker will be allocated within 48 hours to complete a full assessment.	
	The local authority will refer into Aspire for a full assessment of a family member or friend as soon as	If the family to be assessed lives outside of England, Wales, Northern Ireland or	

	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
	<p>possible following the conclusion of a positive viability assessment.</p> <p>To enable court timescales to be met, this could be before a full assessment is ordered by the court but where the viability assessment is positive and where the local authority is recommending a full assessment to the court.</p> <p>If the family to be assessed lives outside of England, Wales, Northern Ireland or Scotland, the assessment will need to be undertaken by an international organisation such as Children and Families Across Borders (CFAB) or via ICACU, with access to local systems for undertaking statutory enquiries and medicals, and knowledge of the local cultural and legal context. It is the responsibility of the local authority to fund this.</p> <p>Any assessments of family members from overseas if they travel to this area for a time limited period will be undertaken by the local authority social worker. In these circumstances, any assessment can only be undertaken at the level of a viability assessment, given the need to undertake statutory and medical checks of the applicants in their country of residence, to explore their home conditions and financial circumstances, and also to visit referees.</p>	<p>Scotland, Aspire will offer advice and assistance upon request, but will not undertake the assessment.</p>	
	<p>The local authority will respond to all requests for local authority statutory checks for anyone living in their area within 15 working days.</p>	<p>The Aspire social worker will undertake all relevant enquiries and investigations relevant to completing a full assessment.</p>	

	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
	If English is not the first language for any applicants, the local authority will fund the cost of interpreters to enable the Aspire worker to undertake the assessment.	Once completed and signed off by the team manager, the report will be submitted to the local authority legal team and to the social worker with primary responsibility for the child for submission to court.	
	The local authority social worker will retain primary case work responsibility for the child and for the court case throughout.	The Aspire social worker will attend court to give evidence on their assessment if requested.	
<b>Direct applications for Special Guardianship Orders</b>	Enquiries and notifications about Special Guardianship Order applications, which are received by the local authority where the child is not the subject of care proceedings, will be referred to Aspire within 24 hours.	Enquiries and notifications about Special Guardianship Order applications, where the child is not the subject of care proceedings, will be responded to by the Aspire duty worker within 24 hours.	
	The local authority will respond to all requests for local authority statutory checks for anyone living in their area within 15 working days.	Aspire will allocate a social worker to undertake all enquiries and complete all reports in respect of Special Guardianship Order applications, where the child is not the subject of care proceedings.	
	If legal advice or support at the court hearing is required, the local authority legal team where the child and family live will be responsible for providing advice to or support to the Aspire social worker at the court hearing if this is required.	The Aspire social worker will attend all relevant court hearings in respect of such applications.	

## FOSTER CARERS WISHING TO ADOPT OR APPLY FOR A SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP ORDER FOR A CHILD IN THEIR CARE

	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
	Where a foster carer expresses an interest in adopting or applying for a Special Guardianship Order in relation to a child in their care, the local authority will contact Aspire for a social worker to be allocated to undertake a joint visit to explore further.	Upon request, Aspire will allocate a social worker to undertake a joint visit with the child's allocated social worker in the local authority to explore further.	
		Should the foster carer wish to proceed following the joint visit, Aspire will undertake either an adoption assessment within statutory timescales of 4 months, or a special guardianship assessment in line with legislation.	
	The local authority social worker will continue to take primary responsibility for the child. If the foster carer is a local authority foster carer, they will continue to support the carer in line with fostering regulations whilst the assessment is being undertaken by Aspire. If the foster carer is an Independent Fostering Provider (IFP) carer, that agency will continue to support the carer whilst the assessment is being undertaken.		
	Responsibility for funding any support including financial support post order will be held by the local authority.	Post order, Aspire will provide core support services as provided to other adopters or special guardians.	

## SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP SUPPORT

	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
	The local authority will signpost enquiries and referrals for special guardianship support to Aspire within 24 hours.	Aspire have information about special guardianship core support services on their website.	
	If the primary reason for the referral is that the child is at risk of significant harm and/or the child is on the edge of care, the local authority will retain primary responsibility for the case, to undertake S47 enquiries and allocate a social worker where LSCB thresholds are met.	Aspire will maintain a daily duty service to ensure that all of those making an enquiry about special guardianship support or requesting a special guardianship support assessment are responded to within 24 hours.	
	The local authority social worker will be responsible for formulating a support plan where a Special Guardianship Order is the outcome for the child in care proceedings.	The Aspire Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Team will offer advice and give information about core special guardianship support services offered by Aspire to inform the support plan for the court.	
	If a Supervision Order is made alongside a Special Guardianship Order, the local authority will retain responsibility for the Supervision Order.	If a Supervision Order is made alongside a Special Guardianship Order, Aspire will offer the family access to the core special guardianship core support services of counselling, advice and information and access to support groups, but will not take responsibility for the Supervision Order.	The funding formula agreed in the Business Case did not include Aspire taking responsibility for Supervision Orders made alongside Special Guardianship Orders.
	The agreement to, means testing, administration, payment and review of special guardianship	Aspire will take responsibility for managing direct contact arrangements if	Harmonisation of adoption and special

	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
	allowances or other financial support to special guardians, including the costs of managing direct contact arrangements and any costs incurred in the provision of therapeutic support, will remain the responsibility of the relevant local authority.	agreed as part of the support plan submitted to court, and if funded by the local authority.	guardianship allowances across all the local authorities will be undertaken at some future point.
	Where the child was not looked after immediately prior to a Special Guardianship Order, the local authority has discretion but is under no duty to offer an assessment of the need for special guardianship support services, including any assessment of need for financial support.	Where a Special Guardianship Order is made as a result of a direct application to court and not as part of care proceedings, the Aspire worker completing the report for the court will consider the need for support after the order is made. In such cases, special guardians and their families will be offered access to the core support services of counselling, advice and information and access to training and support groups offered by Aspire.	

## LEGAL

	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>Children</b>	The local authority social worker will have primary responsibility for permanency planning and all court proceedings in relation to Looked After Children, including applications for Care and Placement Orders and Special Guardianship Orders.	Aspire will have responsibility for the completion of special guardianship assessments referred to them by the local authority but will not have primary responsibility for the child or court proceedings.	



	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
	The local authority social worker will be responsible for any appeals against the making of Care and Placement Orders within the timescales allowed by the court at the time of making those orders, even if primary responsibility for the child has been transferred to Aspire.		
	If casework responsibility is not transferred to Aspire at the point of Placement Order, the local authority social worker will be responsible for all legal challenges by the birth family to the Care and Placement Orders until an Adoption Order has been made.	If casework responsibility has transferred to Aspire, the Aspire social worker will be responsible for responding to legal challenges until an Adoption Order has been made, other than an appeal against the Care and Placement Orders within the timescales allowed by the court at the time of making those orders.	
	The local authority legal team will be responsible for supporting the primary case holder, whether this is the local authority social worker or Aspire social worker, in responding to legal appeals against or challenges to the making of Care and Placement Orders or Special Guardianship Orders, where the child was previously a Looked After Child in that authority.		
<b>Adults affected by adoption</b>	As host authority, any legal advice in relation to an assessment or other matter relating to prospective or approved adopters, or other service users will be provided by the BCP Council legal team.		
<b>Adoption Panel</b>	If the Aspire Adoption Panel require legal advice in relation to any matter under their consideration,		

	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
	<p>this will be provided by the BCP Council legal team, as BCP is the host authority.</p> <p>The exception to this is where a relinquished child is presented to the Aspire Adoption Panel prior to a local authority decision as to whether he or she should be placed for adoption. In such cases, the child's originating local authority remain responsible for providing all relevant legal advice to enable the panel to reach a recommendation.</p>		

### **ARCHIVING AND ACCESS TO RECORDS**

	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
	<p>The local authority will retain responsibility for storing and maintaining electronic and paper adoption records archived prior to 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017, in accordance with Regulations and Statutory Guidance.</p> <p>This includes records in relation to prospective adopters and adopters, adopted adults, adoption support to families, birth parents, indirect exchanges of information (letterbox), children subject to adoption plans and adopted.</p> <p>This also includes records in relation to special guardianship assessments and support.</p>	<p>Aspire will take responsibility for storing and maintaining electronic and paper records in line with Regulations and Statutory Guidance for any case open to them and archived after 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017 in relation to prospective adopters and adopters, adoption or special guardianship support to families, adopted adults, birth parents where a separate case management record to their child's record has been opened, and indirect (letterbox) exchanges of information.</p>	
	<p>The local authority will retain responsibility for storing and maintaining electronic and paper records archived after 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017 in accordance</p>		

	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASPIRE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
	with Regulations and Statutory Guidance, in relation to children with adoption plans and adopted.		
	The local authority will provide access to Aspire to any records in their archive in relation to prospective adopters and adopters, adopted adults, adoption support to families, birth parents, indirect exchanges of information (letterbox), children subject to adoption plans and adopted, which are required for new referrals to Aspire after 1 <sup>st</sup> July 2017 where those records are required to inform or assist Aspire in the work they are undertaking.	Aspire will take responsibility for the data storage and security of any information accessed by an Aspire worker from archived records held in the local authority in line with Regulations and Statutory Guidance. Once the case is closed, Aspire will either return that information if requested to the originating local authority or will dispose of it confidentially.	

Appendix C

**Protocol for the Handling of Inter Organisational Complaints in Relation to Aspire Adoption**

**Between**

Aspire Adoption (Hosted by Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council)

Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council

Dorset Council



## Index

Page 1	Title page
Page 2	Index, Reason and Purpose of the Protocol
Pages 2 - 4	Protocol
Page 5	Appendix 1 - Case Holder timeline
Page 6	Appendix 2 – Flowchart (single authority complaints)
Page 7	Appendix 3 – Flowchart (Joint complaints)
Page 8	Contacts

### **Reason and Purpose for the Protocol**

Aspire Adoption is a Regional Adoption Agency which has been formed through an inter authority agreement with Bournemouth Borough Council as the hosting authority. From 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017 adoption staff from Dorset County Council and the Borough of Poole will be transferred to Bournemouth Borough Council under TUPE arrangements. Bournemouth Borough Council hold management responsibility for staff working within Aspire.

Aspire is responsible for the recruitment, assessment, training and support of prospective adopters, matching and placement, adoption panel and support work. In addition, Aspire staff will be undertaking Special Guardianship Order assessments and hold some case holding responsibilities post Placement Order. Please see the attached case holder timeline in Appendix 1 for further information.

Aspire is overseen by a Management Board comprising of senior management representatives from Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset County Council and Borough of Poole.

The purpose of this protocol is to provide a guide for the management of complaints, to demonstrate a commitment to work together to provide a positive outcome, ensure ownership of complaints, to reduce confusion and ensure clarity for the complainant. All complaint investigations will take place under relevant complaints legislation and guidance.

All organisations party to this protocol will ensure that any complaints arising from the joint working are handled in line with this protocol.

### **The Protocol**

#### **Complaint Manager Role**

For each signatory organisation, the designated Complaints Manager is responsible for co-ordinating whatever actions are required or implied by this protocol.

As host authority, Bournemouth Borough Council's Complaints Manager will act as the Complaints Manager for Aspire.

They will co-operate with other Complaint Managers and agree who will take the lead role in inter-organisational complaints.

In the unlikely event that Complaints Managers are unable to reach agreement about any matter covered in this protocol, they should each refer the matter promptly to the relevant senior Manager in their respective authorities.

### **The Process**

#### **Single Authority Complaints – See flowchart in Appendix 2**

The receiving authority will establish case and therefore complaint responsibility. Where the complaint responsibility lies solely with one authority, the responsible authority will investigate and respond to the complainant through their usual statutory processes.

If the complaint needs to be passed from one authority to another to achieve this, the receiving authority should always obtain **consent** from the complainant to pass their complaint to the responsible authority to respond. Consent should be in writing and kept by the receiving authority for their records.

The responsible authority will progress the complaint in accordance with their procedure from the point of acknowledgement onwards.

#### **Joint Authority Complaints – See flowchart in Appendix 3**

Where this document refers to joint authority complaints, it is understood that this could also refer to authority / Aspire complaints. In this case, Bournemouth's Complaints Manager will act on behalf of Aspire.

Where it is established that the complaint is jointly held between two authorities, the receiving authority's Complaints Manager will obtain consent to share with the responsible authorities.

The Complaints Managers from the responsible authorities will discuss and agree which authority is to take the lead in managing the complaint process. In determining this, consideration will be given to the number of complaint elements for each authority and the 'weight' of the complaints being made, or this role will default to the receiving authority if the number and weight of complaints is equal.

The lead authority Complaints Manager will be responsible for acknowledging the complaint and managing the complaint process at Stage 1 and in coordinating a joint response.

Should a request for a Stage 2 consideration be received, the Complaints Managers will review the aspects of complaint being brought to Stage 2 to ensure that the lead authority is still relevant. The split of investigation costs between authorities will be agreed and the lead authority Complaint Manager will be responsible for appointing an Investigating Officer and an Independent Person at their agreed rates.

The investigation will produce a joint report and the authorities Adjudicating Officers will consider the aspects of the investigation report relevant to their authority and respond to these. The lead authority Complaint Manager will combine the responses to provide a joint response to the complainant.

Following a Stage 3 review request, the Complaints Managers will review the aspects of complaint being brought to Stage 3 to ensure that the lead authority is still relevant. The lead authority Complaint Manager will make arrangements following their own procedures. Both Adjudicating Officers will attend if complaints remain unresolved for both authorities. As in Stage 2, the cost will be split between the authorities as agreed and a joint response to the Panel's report and any recommendations issued to the complainant.

The authorities will work together where complaints are considered by the Local Government Ombudsman to ensure that joint working is maintained.

### **MP Enquiries**

In the event of an MP enquiry, joint discussion and agreement will take place between Complaints Managers and Aspire where appropriate regarding who to take the lead with management of the enquiry. This will then follow the usual process of the lead authority.

### **Compliments**

Each authority to process their own compliments in their usual way. Compliments for Aspire staff should be passed to the Bournemouth Complaint's Manager to record.

### **Recording and Learning**

Each authority will remain responsible for recording and reporting complaints and learning made about its staff and service in line with the statutory guidance.

Joint complaints may be reviewed to ensure that any inter authority learning is embedded in service improvements.

**Aspire Adoption**

**Case Holder Timeline**

**Aspire Adoption – pre Placement Order**

Recruitment, assessment, training and support of prospective adopters - for all authorities.  
  
Special Guardianship Order Assessments – for all authorities

**Aspire Adoption – post Placement Order involvement**

Majority of children Social Worker case holding responsibility taken over from originating authority post Placement Order  
Matching and placement – for all authorities.  
Adoption support work – for all authorities (not financial).  
Post adoption indirect contact (letterbox)  
Adoption Panel - for all authorities.  
Special Guardianship Order support – for all authorities (not financial).  
Agency Decision Maker - for decisions about the suitability of adopters.

**Placement Order Made / Special Guardianship Order Made**

**Originating Authority – pre Placement Order or Special Guardianship Order**

Permanency planning, court process and early identification of child requiring adoption:

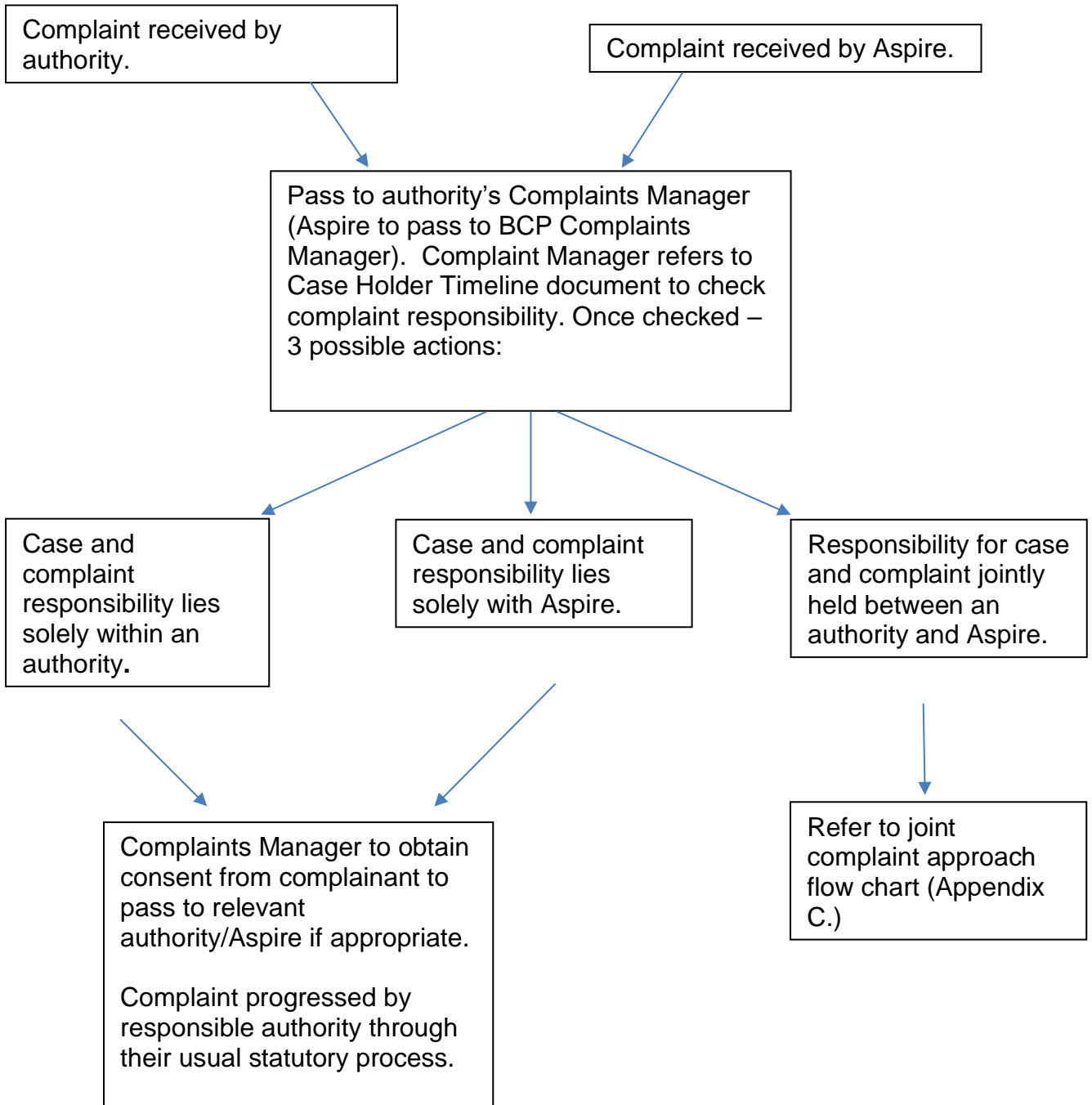
- all adoption case holding responsibility up to Placement Order, including Agency Decision that the child should be placed for adoption.
- case responsibility for care planning and court process for Children in Care where a Special Guardianship Order is the permanency plan.

**Originating Authority – post Placement Order or Special Guardianship Order**

**Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole** – All adoption case holding responsibility transferred to Aspire following Placement Order – local authority retain responsibility for Independent Reviewing Officer/Children in Care reviews.  
**Dorset** – Approximately 20% of adoption case holding responsibility transferred to Aspire following Placement Order – local authority retain responsibility for Independent Reviewing Officer/Children in Care reviews.  
**Dorset/ Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole-** responsibility for any Supervision Orders made alongside a Special Guardianship Order.



**Protocol for Dealing with Complaints in relation to the Regional Adoption Agency – Aspire and its partners  
Flowchart following initial contact from complainant**

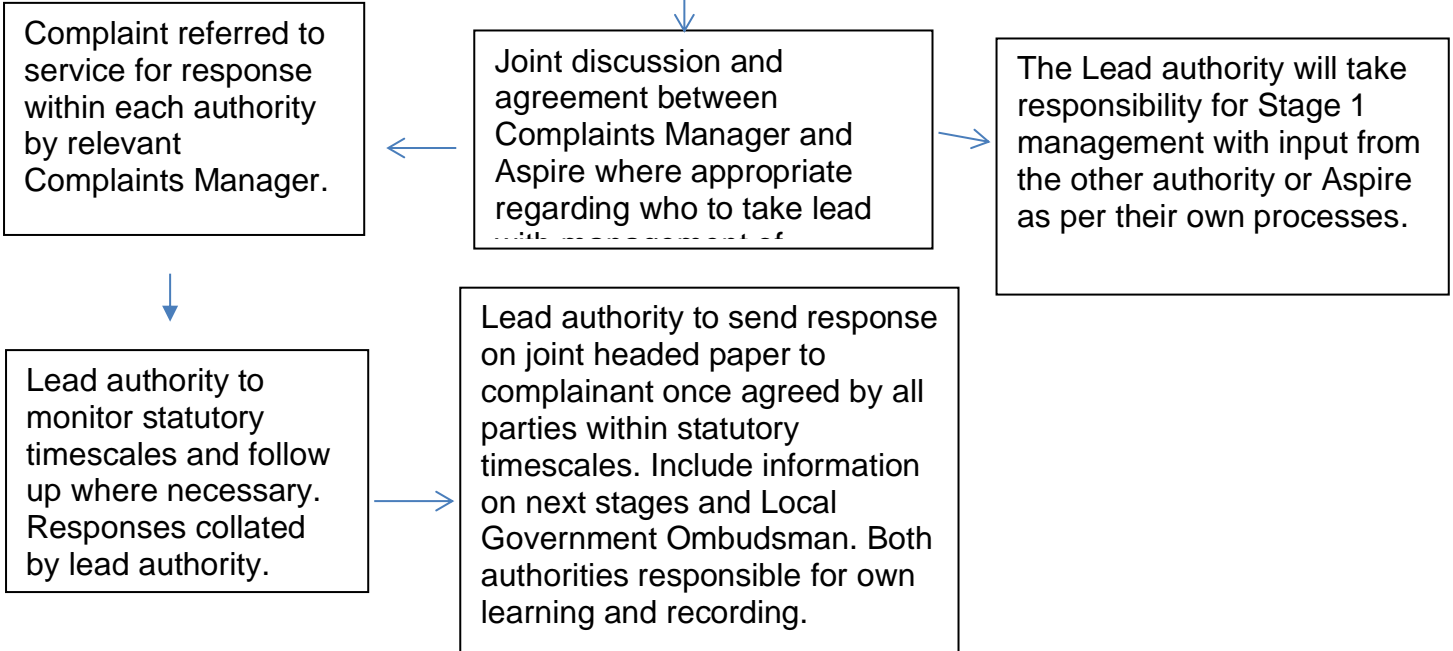


**Protocol for Dealing with Complaints in relation to the Regional Adoption Agency – Aspire and its partners  
Flowchart following identification of joint complaint**

Responsibility for case and complaint identified as being jointly held between originating authority and Aspire.



**Stage 1 process** - Receiving complaints manager to obtain consent from complainant to share complaint with other authority / Aspire as appropriate.



**Stage 2 process** – review complaint to ensure lead authority still relevant. Agree between relevant complaint managers how investigation cost will be split. Lead authority appoints investigators with agreement of other authority and provides information to complainant. Complaint to be investigated in accordance with procedure of lead authority following the Statutory Guidance. Joint report and adjudication to be issued to complainant on completion.



**Stage 3 process** – Same costs split as the Stage 2 process as this is a review of Stages 1 & 2. Lead authority appoints panel with agreement of other authority and provides information to complainant. Review to be completed in accordance with procedure of lead authority following the Statutory Guidance. Both authorities Adjudicating Officers to attend review. Joint adjudication to be issued to complainant on completion.



**LGO Referral** – Authorities to work together to provide Local Government Ombudsman with information.

## Contacts



### **Children and Young People's Services Complaints Manager**

Karen Mayo 01202 714740 [k.mayo@poole.gov.uk](mailto:k.mayo@poole.gov.uk)



### **Senior Assurance Manager – Complaints Team**

Julie Taylor 01305 225076 [julie.taylor@dorsetcc.gov.uk](mailto:julie.taylor@dorsetcc.gov.uk)

### **Adult and Children's Complaints Manager**

Teresa Salmon 01202 458712 [socialcarecomplaints@bournemouth.gov.uk](mailto:socialcarecomplaints@bournemouth.gov.uk)



### **Aspire Adoption Manager**

Michele Whiting (Interim) 0300 123 9868 [michelle.whiting@aspireadoption.co.uk](mailto:michelle.whiting@aspireadoption.co.uk)

This page is intentionally left blank

# Recommendation to Cabinet 17 May 2022

From the People and Health Overview Committee of 3  
May 2022

## Youth Justice Plan 2022/23

### For Recommendation to Council

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr A Parry, Children, Education, Skills and Early Help

**Local Councillor(s):** All

**Executive Director:** T Leavy, Executive Director of People - Children

**Report Author:** David Webb  
**Title:** Manager, Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service  
**Tel:** 01202 794321  
**Email:** david.webb@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

**Report Status:** Public

#### **Recommendation:**

That Cabinet recommends the approval of the Youth Justice Plan 2022/23 to Full Council.

#### **Appendices**

Report to the People and Health Overview Committee – 3 May 2022 – Youth Justice Plan 2022/23, including the following appendices:

Appendix 1: Youth Justice Plan 2022/23

An extract of notes of the People and Health Overview Committee are to follow but will be published before Cabinet on 17 May 2022. They will be accessible via the link in the background papers below.

**Background papers**

[People and Health Overview Committee – 3 May 2022](#)

# People and Health Overview Committee

## 03 May 2022

### Youth Justice Plan 2022/23

#### For Recommendation to Cabinet

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr A Parry, Children, Education, Skills and Early Help

**Local Councillor(s):** All

**Executive Director:** T Leavy, Executive Director of People - Children

**Report Author:** David Webb  
**Title:** Manager, Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service  
**Tel:** 01202 794321  
**Email:** david.webb@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

**Report Status:** Public

#### **Recommendation:**

That the People and Health Overview Committee endorse the Youth Justice Plan so that Cabinet can recommend its approval to Full Council.

#### **Reason for Recommendation:**

Local authorities are required to publish an annual Youth Justice Plan, setting out how the statutory requirements for a multi-agency youth offending team are fulfilled locally. Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service is a partnership between Dorset Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, along with Dorset Police, NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group and The Probation Service (Dorset). Approval for the Youth Justice Plan is also being sought from Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council. The Youth Justice Plan needs to be approved by the full Council.

#### **1. Executive Summary**

Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 there is a statutory requirement to publish an annual Youth Justice Plan which must provide specified information about the local provision of youth justice services. The Youth Justice Board

provides guidance about what must be included in the plan and recommends a structure for the plan. The draft Youth Justice Plan for the Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service is attached at Appendix One. A brief summary of the Youth Justice Plan is provided in this report.

## **2. Financial Implications**

The Youth Justice Plan reports on the resourcing of the Youth Justice Service. Local authority and other partner budget contributions have remained static since 2014/15, apart from a one-off cost of living increase to local authority contributions in 2019/20, along with a redistribution of the funding proportions to reflect Local Government Reorganisation. The annual Youth Justice Grant reduced from £790,000 in 2014/15 to £607,968 in 2020/21, rising to £659,239 for 2021/22. At the time of writing, the grant award for 2022/23 has not been announced.

The creation of the pan-Dorset Youth Justice Service in 2015 increased the service's resilience and ability to adapt to reduced funding and increased costs. The management of vacancies, and the deletion of some posts, has enabled a balanced budget to be achieved in the years to 2022.

## **3. Well-being and Health Implications**

Young people in contact with youth justice services are known to be more likely than other young people to have unmet or unidentified health needs. The Youth Justice Service includes seconded health workers who work directly with young people and who facilitate their engagement with community health services. A summary of their work is included in the Youth Justice Plan.

## **4. Climate implications**

No adverse environmental impact has been identified. The Covid-19 restrictions led to changes in some of the Youth Justice Service's working practices. These changes include reductions in staff travel, both to and from work and to visit service users, with more activities now being carried out remotely.

## **5. Other Implications**

The Youth Justice Plan sets out the measures being taken to prevent and reduce offending and anti-social behaviour by young people. The Youth Justice Service contributes actively to the work of the Community Safety Partnership.

Children who are in contact with the Youth Justice Service often experience risks to their safety and well-being, including risks at home, risks in the community such as child exploitation and detriment to their education prospects. The Youth



Justice Plan refers to the work of the Youth Justice Service to safeguard children, working in conjunction with other local services in the Dorset Council area. The Youth Justice Service is working closely with colleagues in other Dorset Children's Services, including the Harbour Project, in order to align with new service developments.

## **6. Risk Assessment**

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

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

## **7. Equalities Impact Assessment**

The Youth Justice Plan does not relate to a new strategy, policy or function so an Equalities Impact Assessment has not been undertaken. Some information about equalities issues is included in the report. No adverse equalities impacts have been identified.

It is recognised nationally that young people with diverse heritage, and young people in the care of the local authority, are over-represented in the youth justice system and in the youth custodial population. It is also recognised that young people known to the YJS may experience learning difficulties or disabilities, including in respect of speech, language and communication needs. Information from Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service records, summarised in the Youth Justice Plan, shows that these issues of over-representation also apply in our area. Actions have been identified in the Youth Justice Plan to address these issues.

## **8. Appendices**

Appendix 1: Youth Justice Plan 2022/23.

Appendix 1 will be published as a supplement to the agenda.

## **9. Background Papers**

9.1 The Youth Justice Plan provides information on the resourcing, structure, governance, partnership arrangements and performance of the Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service. The Plan also describes the national and local youth justice context for 2022/23 and sets out our priorities for this year.

9.2 The Youth Justice Board continues to monitor three 'key performance indicators' for youth justice. The first indicator relates to the rate of young

people entering the justice system for the first time. Local performance in this area had declined in the period 2016-2018 but has been improving since then. The latest national data, relating to the 12 months to September 2021, shows a combined pan-Dorset rate of 183 per 100,000 under 18-year-olds entering the justice system for the first time. This compares with a figure of 288 per 100,000 under 18-year-olds in the year to December 2018. Local data enables us to monitor numbers of first-time entrants in each local authority area. This local data shows a continuing fall in the number of Dorset children entering the justice system. Dorset Council's emphasis on early intervention and prevention work for children aligns with the Youth Justice Service priority to reduce children entering the justice system for the first time.

- 9.3 The other two national indicators relate to reducing reoffending and minimising the use of custodial sentences. The reoffending rate fluctuates, partly because of the current counting rules for this measure. The latest national data, reported in the Youth Justice Plan, shows that the performance of Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service exceeds the regional and national averages.
- 9.4 Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service has low rates of custodial sentences. This is particularly the case for young people from the Dorset Council area. No Dorset children were sentenced to custody in the year April 2021 to March 2022. The Youth Justice Service works closely with other Dorset children's services to meet the needs and manage the risks of the small number of young people whose offending is serious enough to place them at risk of custody.

**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.

# Youth Justice Plan 2022/23

<b>Service</b>	Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service
<b>Service Manager/ Lead</b>	David Webb
<b>Chair of YJS Board</b>	Theresa Leavy

## Contents

1. [Introduction, vision and strategy](#)
2. [Local context](#)
3. [Child First](#)
4. [Voice of the child](#)
5. [Governance, leadership and partnership arrangements](#)
6. [Resources and services](#)
7. [Progress on previous plan](#)
8. [Performance and priorities](#)
9. [National standards](#)
10. [Challenges, risks and issues](#)
11. [Service improvement plan](#)
12. [Evidence-based practice and innovation](#)
13. [Looking forward](#)
14. [Sign off, submission and approval](#)
15. [Appendix 1](#) - Full board membership; linked to Governance, leadership and partnership arrangements
16. [Appendix 2](#)

## 1. Introduction, vision and strategy

### Foreword

#### Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service Statement of Purpose

Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service works with children in the local youth justice system. Our purpose is to help those children to make positive changes, to keep them safe, to keep other people safe, and to repair the harm caused to victims. We support the national Youth Justice Board Vision for a 'child first' youth justice system:

*A youth justice system that sees children as children, treats them fairly and helps them to build on their strengths so they can make a constructive contribution to society. This will prevent offending and create safer communities with fewer victims.*

#### Who We Are and What We Do

Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service (DCYJS) is a statutory partnership between Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, Dorset Council, Dorset Police, The Probation Service (Dorset) and NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group.

We are a multi-disciplinary team which includes youth justice officers, restorative justice specialists, parenting workers, education and employment workers, police officers, a probation officer, nurses, speech and language therapists and a psychologist.

More information about the Youth Justice Service (YJS) partnership and the members of the YJS team is provided later in this document.

The team works with children who have committed criminal offences to help them make positive changes and to reduce the risks to them and to other people. We also work with parents and carers to help them support their children to make changes.

We contact all victims of crimes committed by the children we work with. We offer those victims the chance to take part in restorative justice processes so we can help to repair the harm they have experienced.

The organisations in the YJS partnership also work together to improve the quality of our local youth justice system, and to ensure that young people who work with the YJS can access the specialist support they need for their care, health and education.

The combination of direct work with children, parents and victims and work to improve our local youth justice and children's services systems enables us to meet our strategic objectives to:

- Reduce the number of children in the youth justice system
- Reduce reoffending by children in the youth justice system
- Improve the safety and well-being of children in the youth justice system
- Reduce and repair the harm caused to victims and the community
- Improve outcomes for children in the youth justice system.

## Introduction

This document is the Youth Justice Strategic Plan for the Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service (DCYJS) for 2022/23. It sets out the key priorities and targets for the service for the next 12 months as required by the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 and overseen by the Youth Justice Board. This Plan has been developed under the direction of the DCYJS Partnership Board after consultation with DCYJS staff and taking into account feedback from DCYJS users. This year's Plan follows more detailed and prescriptive guidance from the Youth Justice Board about the Plan's contents and format.

The Youth Justice Strategic Plan:

- summarises the DCYJS structure, governance and partnership arrangements
- outlines the resources available to the DCYJS
- reviews achievements and developments during 2021/22
- identifies emerging issues and describes the partnership's priorities
- sets out our priorities and actions for improving youth justice outcomes this year.

## Headline Strategic Priorities for 2022/23

We will:

- Continue to reduce the rate of local children entering the justice system
- Widen and deepen local understanding of and response to over-representation in the youth justice system
- Continue to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of the local youth justice system
- Make our assessments, plans and interventions more accessible, collaborative and responsive to discrimination
- Clarify and align activities to repair harm, to increase employability and to support pro-social interests and activities, including links to community organisations.

## 2. Local context

Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service (DCYJS) is a partnership working across two local authorities: Dorset Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council. Dorset Council covers a large geographical, predominantly rural area with market towns and a larger urban area in Weymouth and Portland. Dorset Council has a population of about 380,000. Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole together form a conurbation with a population of nearly 400,000.

Other members of the DCYJS Partnership, such as Dorset Police, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, NHS Dorset CCG, Dorset HealthCare Trust and the Probation Service (Dorset) also work across both local authorities.

The following tables provide demographic information about young people in both local authorities:

[Population and benchmarking data:](#)

<b>Population (Age 10-17)</b>		
	<b>Dorset</b>	<b>BCP</b>
<b>Number of Children</b>	33,133	33,929
<b>Male (%)</b>	51.2	51.4
<b>Female (%)<sup>1</sup></b>	48.8	48.6
<b>Pupils eligible for Free School Meals (%)</b>	18.8	17.1
<b>Pupils with SEN Support (%)</b>	12.9	13.2
<b>Pupils with an EHC Plan (%)<sup>2</sup></b>	4.9	3.8
<b>Pupils from Black and Minority Ethnic groups (%)<sup>3</sup></b>	9.1	11
<b>Children living in Poverty after housing costs (%)<sup>4</sup></b>	24.5	24.8

**NB: Ethnicity data is only collected at the January School Census, and the January 2022 census figures are not yet available.**

**2020/21 Benchmarking Data**

	Dorset	BCP	SN	Good+ SN	SW	England
<b>Children in Need as at 31 March (rate per 10,000)</b>	326	398	262	276	275	321
<b>Child Protection Plans as at 31 March (rate per 10,000)</b>	44	48.5	37	38	37	41
<b>Children in Care as at 31 March (rate per 10,000)</b>	66	62	59	58	56	67

Data updated for 2020/21.  
 SN – Statistical Neighbour  
 Good+ SN – Statistical Neighbour rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted: **Cornwall, East Sussex, Shropshire, Suffolk and Wiltshire**  
 SW – South West region data

<sup>1</sup> Source: Dorset mid-year 2020 population estimates (published June 2021)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Source: October 2021 School Census (includes all pupils at a Dorset School aged 10-17; ages as at 31 August 2021)

<sup>3</sup> January 2021 School Census (all non-white British pupils at a Dorset School, excluding 'Refused' and 'Information not yet obtained')

<sup>4</sup> Local child poverty indicators 2019/20. Based on the DWP/HMRC statistics "Children in low income families: local area statistics" (March 2021).

### 3. Child First

The national Youth Justice Board (YJB) promotes a vision of a “*Child First youth justice system, defined as a system where all services:*”

- *Prioritise the best interests of children and recognising their particular needs, capacities, rights and potential. All work is child-focused, developmentally informed, acknowledges structural barriers and meets responsibilities towards children.*
- *Promote children’s individual strengths and capacities to develop their pro-social identity for sustainable desistance, leading to safer communities and fewer victims. All work is constructive and future-focused, built on supportive relationships that empower children to fulfil their potential and make positive contributions to society.*
- *Encourage children’s active participation, engagement and wider social inclusion. All work is a meaningful collaboration with children and their carers.*
- *Promote a childhood removed from the justice system, using pre-emptive prevention, diversion and minimal intervention. All work minimises criminogenic stigma from contact with the system.”*

DCYJS supports these principles and promotes them in its own work and in its interactions with local partners in children’s services and the youth justice system. In 2021 the service changed its name, having previously been called Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service, to reflect the shift away from thinking of children as offenders.

The DCYJS Youth Justice Plan for 2021/22 set out strategic priorities which were aligned with the YJB’s Child First principles, reflecting work to improve both the local youth justice and children’s services systems and the quality of practice within DCYJS. The headline priorities were to:

- Continue and develop work to prevent children entering the justice system
- Reduce the rate of Black and Minority Ethnic children entering custody
- Develop joint work with other local services to improve outcomes for children in the justice system
- Widen the application of trauma-informed practice to all children working with the Youth Justice Service
- Strengthen the team’s work to repair harm and restore relationships.

Evidence of the Partnership’s commitment to Child First principles is embedded throughout this document.

### 4. Voice of the child

DCYJS works collaboratively with children to elicit their views and to hear their voices. The team’s Speech and Language Therapists complete assessments so that each child’s communication needs can be understood and responded to, not just by other workers in the team but also by the child, their carers and other professionals working with the child.

As well as hearing the child's voice in the team's day to day practice, there are also processes in place to gather the views of children and other service users about their experience of the service's work. A 'Smart Survey' feedback form is used, alongside some of the questions in the self-assessment documents that are completed by children and their carers. Service users also make spontaneous comments about the quality of the service's work with them. These comments are recorded and collated to give a wider, less structured perspective on the service's work.

In 2021/22 the service added a different approach to collecting feedback, focusing on a specific topic and conducting in-depth interviews with a small number of young people. The first topic chosen was young people who had been remanded or sentenced to custody in the past three years. The aim was to understand the child's journey to custody, their individual experiences, whether they experienced discrimination and how they had been affected by their contact with the Youth Justice Service and with other agencies, such as the police, the courts, education and children's services.

Eight young people and one parent have been interviewed for this project. A presentation summarising the young people's views has been shared with the Youth Justice Service Partnership Board, with team members in the Youth Justice Service and with other local partners including Dorset Police and the Care Experienced Young People's service in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.

Some of the main findings from this piece of work include:

- The young people experienced permanent exclusion from school as a turning point in their lives
- Most interactions with the Police were 'fair enough' but sometimes young people felt they were targeted more than their peers, with provocative comments from some officers
- Young people did not understand what happened in court and did not feel able to challenge or question it, including when they had doubts about the advice from their solicitor
- The specific resources and interventions used by Youth Justice Service workers were not remembered but the young people did remember the quality of the relationship with individual workers
- Those who were under 18 and in custody found it hard to reflect on their situation and the steps that led to it, perhaps reflecting the instability and lack of safety in their current circumstances
- Young adults in the adult prison estate were better able to reflect. As well as thinking about their journey to custody they also showed insight into their current experiences in custody, describing loneliness, isolation and anxiety about the future.

The learning from this work informs the service's current plans and priorities, reflected in the Service Improvement Plan in section 11 of this document.



## 5. Governance, leadership and partnership arrangements

The work of the Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service is managed strategically by a Partnership Board. The Partnership Board consists of senior representatives of the statutory partner organisations, together with other relevant local partners.

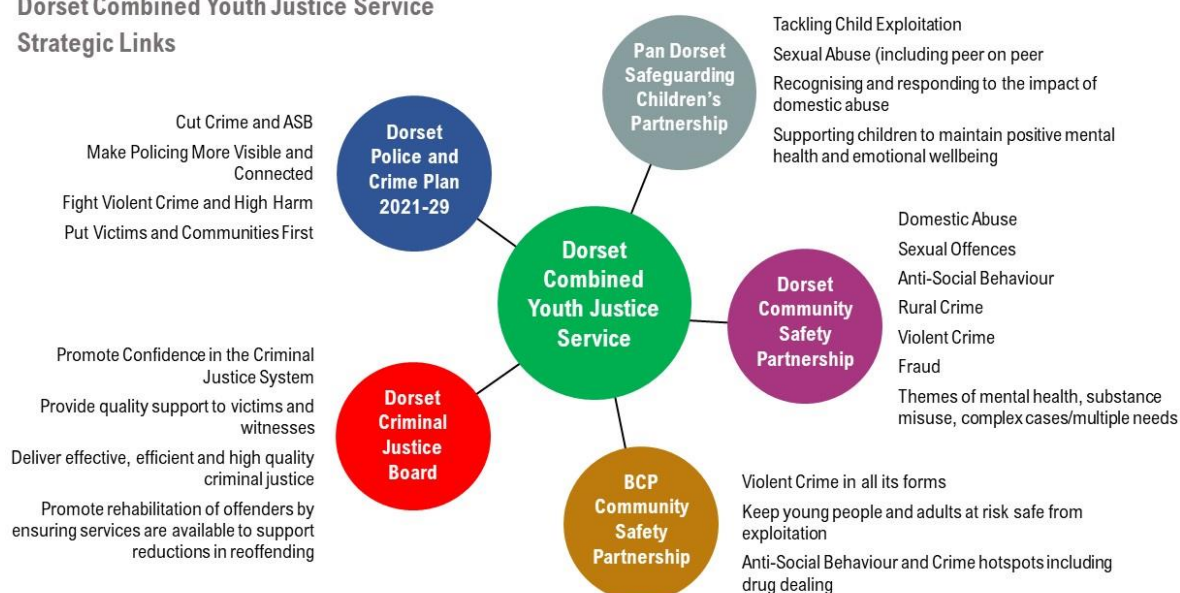
### Membership:

- Dorset Council (chair)
- Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (vice-chair)
- Dorset Police
- The Probation Service (Dorset)
- NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group
- Public Health Dorset
- Dorset Healthcare University Foundation Trust
- Her Majesty's Court and Tribunal service
- Youth Justice Board for England and Wales
- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Full Board membership, including job titles and attendance during 2021/22, is included in Appendix One.

The Partnership Board oversees the development of the Youth Justice Plan, ensuring its links with other local plans.

### Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service Strategic Links



Representation by senior leaders from the key partners enables the DCYJS Manager to resolve any difficulties in multi-agency working at a senior level and supports effective links at managerial and operational levels.

The DCYJS participates in local multi-agency agreements for information sharing, for safeguarding and for the escalation of concerns. Our Personal Information Sharing Agreement underpins local multi-agency work to prevent offending and to reduce reoffending.

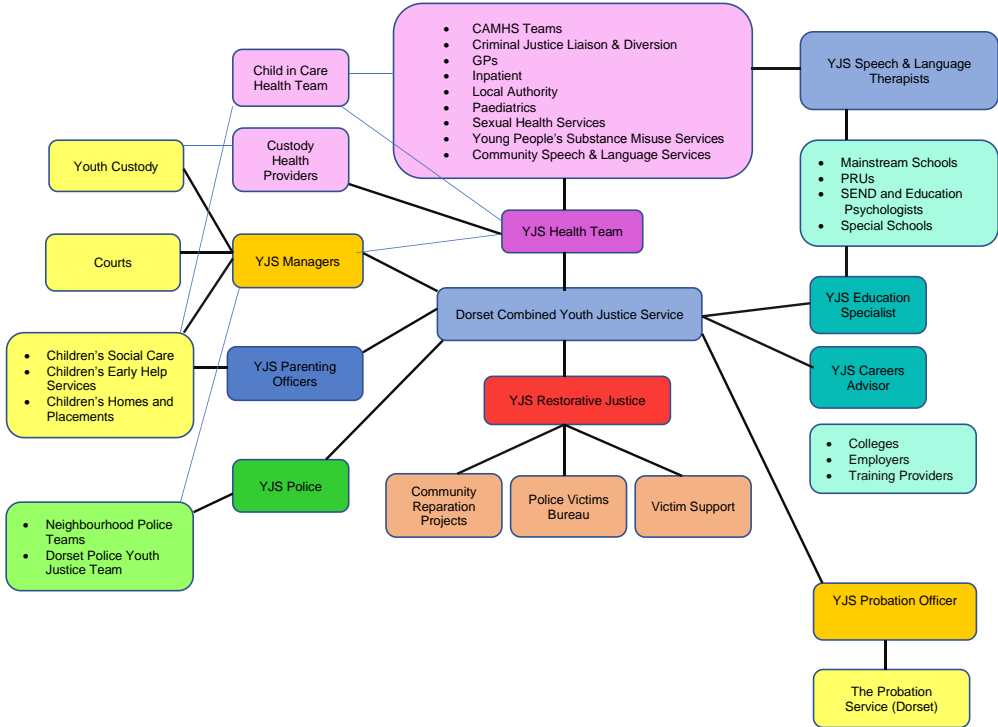
The DCYJS Partnership Board oversees activities by partner agencies which contribute to the key youth justice outcomes, particularly in respect of the prevention of offending.

The Partnership Board also provides oversight and governance for local multi-agency protocols in respect of the criminalisation of children in care and the detention of young people in police custody. The DCYJS Manager chairs multi-agency operational groups for each protocol and reports on progress to the DCYJS Partnership Board.

DCYJS is hosted by Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council. The Head of Service is a Tier 3 Manager, reporting to the Director for Corporate Parenting and Permanence in the Children’s Social Care service and maintaining regular contact with the equivalent post in Dorset Council.

Appendix Two includes the structure chart for DCYJS and structure charts showing where the service is located in each local authority.

DCYJS meets the statutory staffing requirements for youth justice services, set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Its multi-disciplinary team works closely with other local services, as illustrated below:



## 6. Resources and services

The funding contributions to the DCYJS partnership budget are listed below. All local authority staff in DCYJS are employed by Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council. Other staff are seconded from Dorset Police, the Probation Service (Dorset) and Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust. Like all public services, DCYJS operates in a context of reducing resources. Ensuring value for money and making best use of resources is a high priority for the service.

<b>Partner Agency</b>	<b>21/22 Revenue</b> <i>(excluding recharges)</i>	<b>Staff</b>
Dorset Council	£492,800	
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council	£577,700	
Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner	£75,301	2.0 Police Officers
The Probation Service (Dorset)	£5,000	1.0 Probation Officer
NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group	£22,487	2.8 FTE Nurses, 0.8 Psychologist, 1.4 Speech and Language Therapists
Youth Justice Grant	<i>£659,239 (2021/22 figure)</i>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,832,527</b> <i>(assuming standstill contributions from all partners)</i>	

The Youth Justice Board Grant is paid subject to terms and conditions relating to its use. The Grant may only be used towards the achievement of the following outcomes:

- Reduce the number of children in the youth justice system;
- Reduce reoffending by children in the youth justice system;
- Improve the safety and wellbeing of children in the youth justice system; and
- Improve outcomes for children in the youth justice system.

The conditions of the Grant also refer to the services that must be provided and the duty to comply with data reporting requirements.

The Youth Justice Grant contributes to the Partnership's resources for employing practitioners who work with children to prevent and reduce offending and to keep children and other members of the community safe from harm. Resources are also used to provide restorative justice and reparative activities, to promote pro-social activities for children building on their strengths and to improve the education, training and employment opportunities of young people in the local youth justice system.

In addition to the service outcomes listed above, the Youth Justice Grant and other Partnership resources are used to achieve the strategic priorities set out in this Plan. Progress against those priorities is reported to the DCYJS Partnership Board, with oversight also provided by the respective children's services scrutiny committees of the two local authorities.

In recent years DCYJS has benefitted from one-off grant payments from NHS England to support the introduction of trauma-informed practice. In 2021/22 NHS England provided a payment of £22,800 to provide capacity in the service for a 'Trauma Champion' to develop this area of work over a 12-month period commencing in March 2022.

## 7. Progress on previous plan

The DCYJS Youth Justice Plan for 2021/22 identified strategic priorities under the headings of 'System Improvement' and 'Practice Improvement'.

The System Improvement priorities are listed below with a brief summary of progress made:

### Developing work to prevent children entering the justice system:

- Out of Court Disposals protocol between DCYJS and Dorset Police updated to reflect new diversion options and increased commitment to seek diversion outcomes
- Early Help representatives from each local authority now participate in the weekly Out of Court Disposal decision-making meetings
- Options for additional support for children who are subject to informal justice outcomes, such as a Youth Restorative Disposal, to avoid having to enter the justice system in order to access services
- Consolidation of the Youth Diversion Disposal as a response to 'simple' drug possession offences
- Plans for developing the police Youth Diversion Officer role and the availability of the Youth Diversion Disposal for other offence types have been delayed.

### Reducing the rate of Black and Minority Ethnic children entering custody:

- View-seeking work with young people in custody has been undertaken to gain better understanding of issues facing black and mixed heritage children in our local justice system
- Review completed of possible disproportionality in first-time entrants and school exclusion rates in the BCP Council area (over-representation of black and mixed heritage children was not identified in these outcomes)
- Meeting held with senior police and CPS colleagues, a DCYJS manager and the mother of a black child who has been sentenced to custody to enable the family's voice to be heard by key decision-makers
- Whole service meeting held in response to the thematic inspection report on the experiences of black and mixed heritage boys in the justice system to identify relevant team actions (included in the Service Improvement Plan in section 11 of this document)

### Developing work with other local services to improve outcomes for children in the justice system:

- Strengthening of joint working arrangements and information sharing between DCYJS and the Harbour project in Dorset Council to reduce offending risks and improve outcomes

- Development of joint working and practitioner relationships between DCYJS and the Complex Safeguarding Team in BCP Council to help safeguard children who are suffering harm from child exploitation
- Pro-active work with local authority children's social care colleagues to improve joint support for children in care placed out of area and receiving youth justice interventions
- Ongoing work with CCG and local authority colleagues to develop a more integrated and comprehensive response to children who show harmful sexual behaviour
- Initiating a shared self-assessment process between DCYJS, SEND and Virtual School teams to identify possible improvements in our joint working arrangements
- The YJS has contributed to multi-agency work to improve the strategic and operational responses to children carrying weapons and to the use of the National Referral Mechanism but this remains an area for further development.

Practice Improvement priorities for 2021/22 are listed here, with brief details of actions taken, progress made and work still to do:

Widen the application of trauma-informed practice to all children working with the YJS:

- Work done to embed the trauma perspective in DCYJS assessments and plans
- Standard format established for recording health team consultations with case managers to summarise the impact of past trauma and guide engagement with the child
- Use of resources in work with children guided by trauma perspectives with priority given to engagement and relationship-building when necessary
- More work required on balancing the trauma perspective in work with children and the response to victim requirements

Strengthen the team's work to repair harm and restore relationships

- Progress made in embedding the 'standardised approach' for restorative justice responses to offences against emergency workers
- Work with The Harbour project to support their use of restorative approaches
- Some use of restorative approaches to respond to specific issues arising within the team
- Work to develop Unpaid Work and to establish clearer links and differentiation between reparation, victim work, Unpaid Work and positive activities has been delayed by staff sickness and pandemic issues
- Survey completed of staff knowledge, confidence and views on Restorative Justice to guide our plans for 2022/23.

## 8. Performance and priorities

The three national key performance indicators for youth justice services relate to:

- The rate of first time entrants to the criminal justice system
- The rate of reoffending by children in the criminal justice system
- The use of custodial sentences

The YJB publish quarterly performance data for youth justice services, compiled nationally, in relation to these three indicators. Since the start of the pandemic there have been some gaps in the publication of the national data. The information reported below is drawn from the data published in February 2022 for the period ending December 2021.

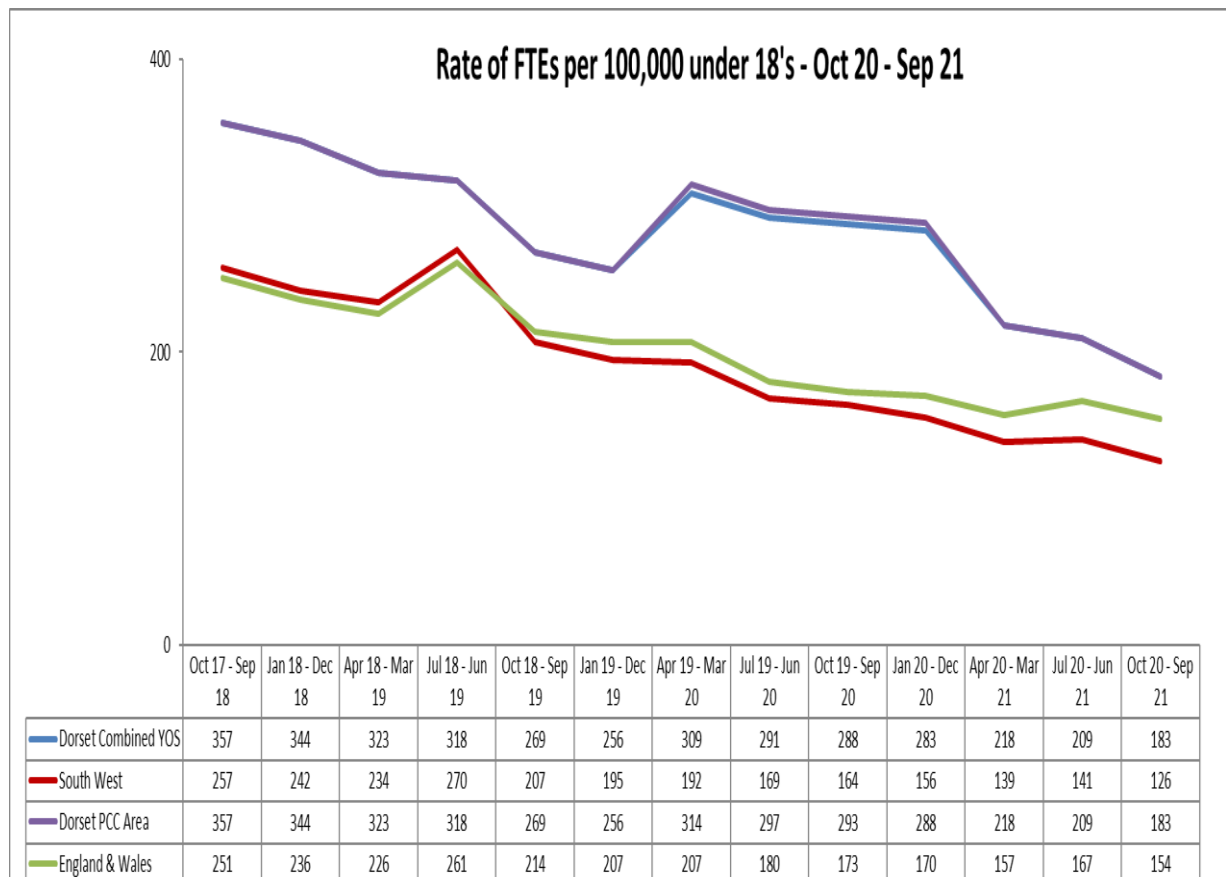
Attention is also paid to the use of custodial remands and to over-representation of minority groups in the youth justice system.

First Time Entrants

A 'First Time Entrant' is a child receiving a formal criminal justice outcome for the first time. A Youth Caution, a Youth Conditional Caution or a court outcome count as a formal criminal justice outcome. There are also informal options available for responding to offences by children. Dorset Police, DCYJS and other children's services work closely together to decide the appropriate outcome for an offence by a child, seeking an informal option whenever possible. It is recognised that receiving a formal justice outcome is in itself detrimental for children.

National performance data for First Time Entrants is drawn from the Police National Computer (PNC). Local data is also recorded on the DCYJS case management system. There is a discrepancy between national and local data for First Time Entrants; it is not possible to compare individual case records to confirm the accuracy of the respective figures. DCYJS has confidence in the accuracy of its case records showing home address information and child in care status.

The following chart shows the most recent published national First Time Entrants data. DCYJS has seen a reduction in its rate of children entering the justice system, reflecting the priorities of the DCYJS partnership and the work undertaken locally to divert children from formal justice outcomes. The combined rate for our two local authorities has dropped from 288 per 100,000 under 18s in the year to September 2020 to 183 in the year to September 2021. DCYJS remains above regional and national averages for this indicator but the gap is narrowing.





Local data for First Time Entrants shows a reduction across both local authority areas in recent years, shown in the following table:

[DCYJS First Time Entrants by Gender and Local Authority past 4 years:](#)

Year	BCP male	BCP female	BCP total	Dorset male	Dorset female	Dorset total	BCP and Dorset total
2018/19	78 (72%)	30 (28%)	108	75 (71%)	31 (29%)	106	214
2019/20	91 (85%)	16 (15%)	107	61 (77%)	18 (23%)	79	186
2020/21	63 (83%)	13 (17%)	76	38 (75%)	13 (25%)	51	127
2021/22 (to end Dec)	47 (87%)	7 (13%)	54	24 (92%)	2 (8%)	26	80
Total	279 (81%)	66 (19%)	345	198 (76%)	64 (24%)	262	607

This table shows that there has been a clear reduction in the number of local children entering the justice system over the past four years. Although there have been reductions in both local authority areas, this is particularly so in Dorset. The reduction applies to both males and females, with a larger proportionate reduction amongst females.

More detailed local data showing information about First Time Entrants over the past four years has been reported to the DCYJS Partnership Board. Some of the key points from this information are that:

- The reduction has not been so marked for the youngest age group with little change to the numbers of 10-13 year-olds entering the justice system
- There does not appear to be over-representation of children with diverse ethnic heritage. Over the past four years, 5% of Dorset's First Time Entrants and 8% of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole's First Time Entrants have been black or mixed heritage children, below the proportions in the population.
- The proportion of First Time Entrants receiving court disposals has increased, from 27% in 2018/19 to 43% in the first 9 months of 2021/22.
- The proportion of First Time Entrants receiving a Youth Caution has dropped from 56% in 2018/19 to 35% in the first 9 months of 2021/22. This suggests that some children are being diverted from Youth Cautions and receiving informal justice outcomes instead.

Following the analysis of local First Time Entrants data for the YJS Partnership Board meeting in January 2022, partners looked in more detail at the local children aged 10-13 who have entered the justice system since April 2020. The following table, drawn from Police, local authority and DCYJS information, shows the level of other needs amongst the BCP children in this group:

[BCP First-Time Entrants aged 13 or younger April 2020 to January 2021](#)

Factor	Yes (out of total 25 children)	Percentage
First contact with police as victim or witness of harm	24	96%
Known to children's social care	19	76%

Fixed Term Exclusions from school	23	92%
Permanent exclusion from school	11	44%
SEN support	14	56%
EHCP	7	28%
Weapons offences	13	52%
Other violence	7	28%
Previous YRD or SSCT input	7	28%
Youth Caution	11	44%
Youth Conditional Caution	10	40%
Referral Order	4	16%

All but one of these children first came to police attention not for their own behaviour but as the victim or witness of harm. In 23 out of 24 such instances the harm took place in the family home, such as witnessing domestic abuse, experiencing physical abuse, having a parent with mental health or substance use problems and/or having parents or older siblings in contact with the police.

The high level of Special Educational Needs in this group, combined with experiencing trauma at home, perhaps helps to explain the high level of fixed term and permanent exclusions from school which these children had experienced, despite their relatively young age.

It is also notable that 13 of these 25 children committed offences involving the possession of a weapon. This raises concern about the risk of harm and perhaps reflects the sense of threat that these children have experienced in their lives to date.

### [Prevention and Diversion](#)

The rate of children entering the justice system is influenced by the effectiveness of local prevention and diversion activities. 'Prevention' refers to work with children who have been identified as being at risk of going on to commit offences if they do not receive additional help. 'Diversion' refers to the response to children who have been identified as committing an offence but who can be diverted from the justice system.

DCYJS does not directly undertake prevention work. Each of our local authorities provides early help services, working with other local organisations like schools, the Dorset Police Safer Schools and Communities Team and the voluntary sector.

In the Dorset Council area oversight of prevention activities sits with the Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People, supported by more detailed work at locality level. The DCYJS Manager is a member of the Strategic Alliance and team members participate in locality meetings to identify and respond to children at risk.

In the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council area, the Children and Young People's Partnership oversees prevention work.



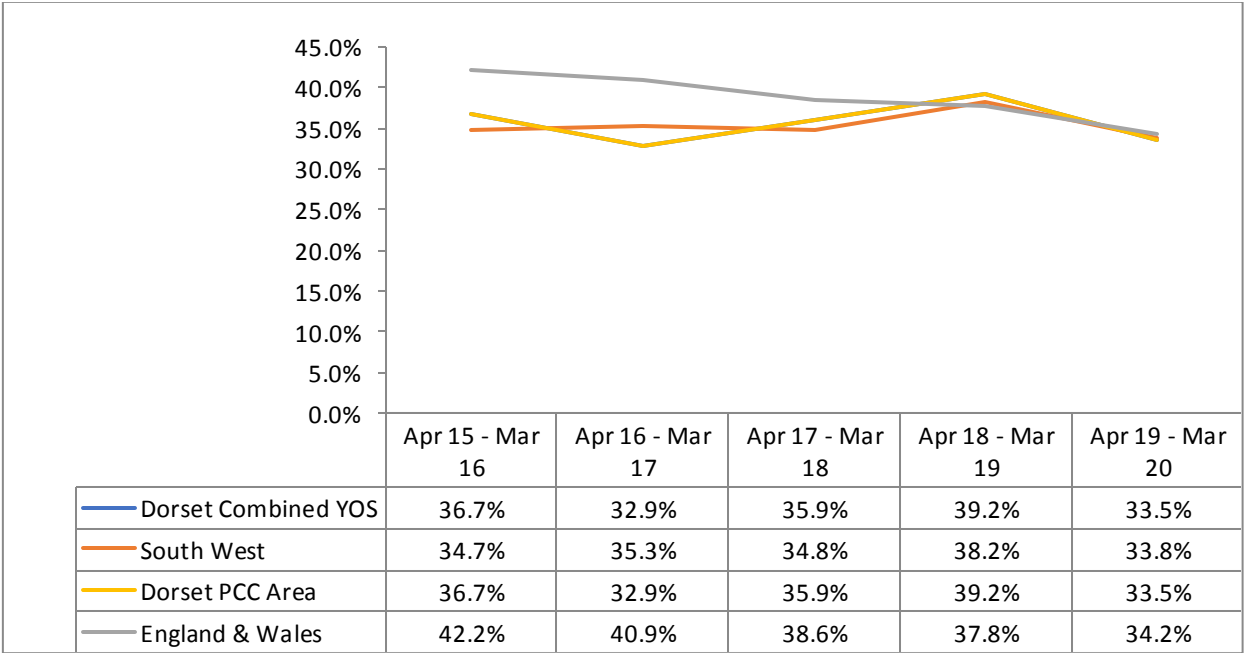
Diversion work is undertaken locally on a partnership basis. Dorset Police, DCYJS and local authority Early Help services meet weekly to review children who have come to attention for committing offences. Decisions are taken about the appropriate response, with diversion options being taken when possible. Diversion activities usually involve additional support for the child and, when appropriate, some form of restorative response in respect of the criminal offence. The Dorset Police Safer Schools and Communities Team, Early Help Services, Children’s Social Care Services and DCYJS each provide support at the diversion stage. The appropriate service for each child is decided on the basis of the child’s needs, risks and existing relationships with professionals.

During 2021/22 Dorset Police have piloted a Youth Diversion Officer. The remit of the post is to help ensure children who are diverted from the justice system get access to appropriate services and to identify and address any barriers preventing this access. Students from Bournemouth University are currently assisting Dorset Police with analysis of diversion work, including the role of the Youth Diversion Officer but extending back three years to look more widely at how outcomes for children who have contact with the justice system.

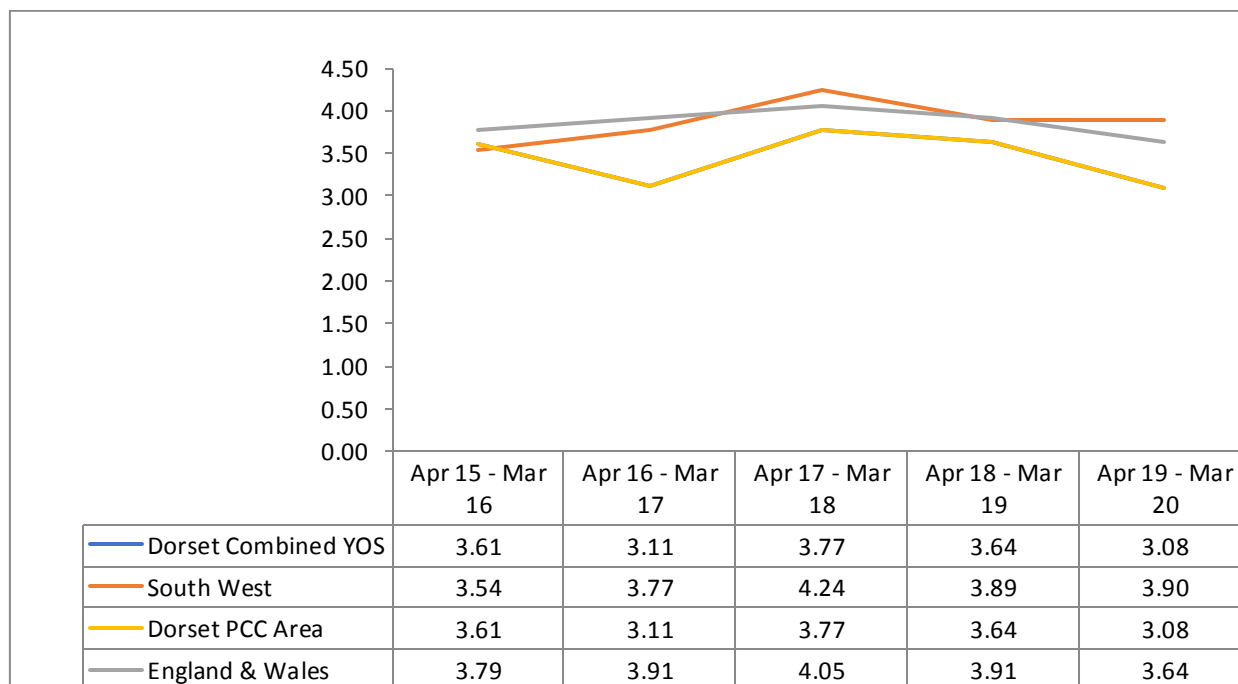
Rate of Proven Reoffending

National re-offending data is published in two formats: the ‘binary’ rate shows the proportion of children in the cohort who go on to be convicted for subsequent offences in the 12 months after their previous justice outcome; the ‘frequency’ rate shows the average number of offences per reoffender. Reoffending data is necessarily delayed in order to allow time to see if the child is reconvicted and for that later outcome to be recorded. The following data therefore relates to children with whom the service worked up to March 2020.

**Reoffending rate (Reoffenders/Number in cohort)**



## Reoffences/Reoffenders



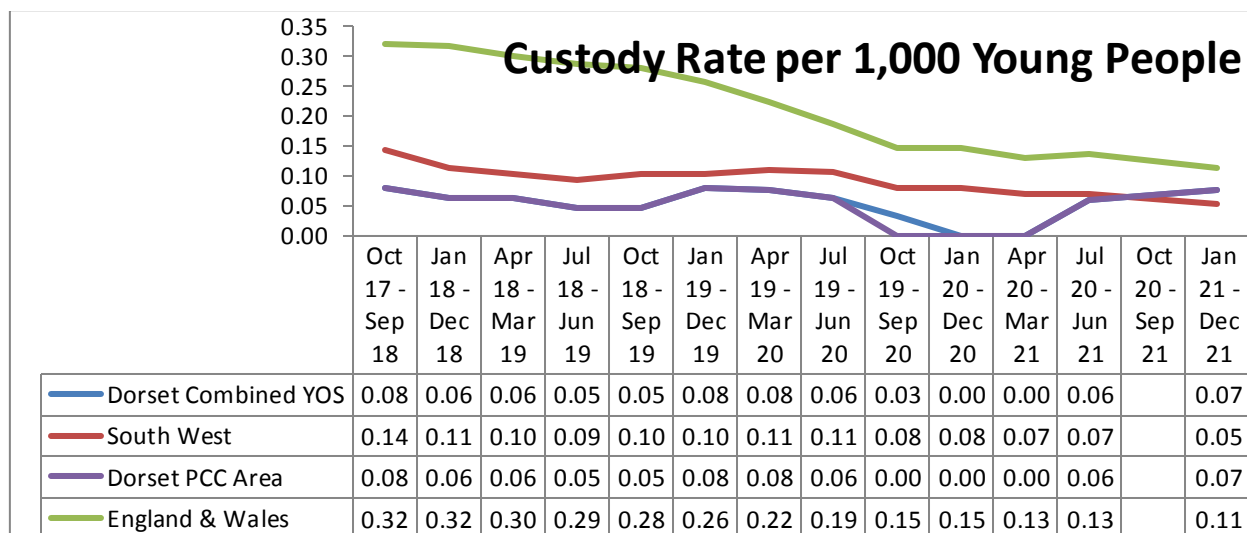
The data shows an improvement in the latest published performance, with Dorset below national and regional averages for both measures.

Local data can also be analysed for a more detailed and specific understanding of reoffending patterns. During 2021/22 the DCYJS Performance and Information Manager has experienced recurring periods of sickness absence, reducing the team's capacity for data analysis. Plans are in place to increase the resilience of the team's data analysis capacity in 2022/23.

## [Use of Custodial Sentences](#)

DCYJS continues to see low numbers of children sentenced to custody.

The latest national data is copied below. The gap in the figures for the year to September 2021 reflects a gap in the national data publication.



### [Supporting children in custody](#)

Members of the DCYJS partnership are committed to reducing the use of custody for children. It is recognised that incarceration can have a damaging effect on children's lives, putting pressure on family relationships, disrupting education, reviving or increasing experiences of trauma and damaging the child's living arrangements. Inspection reports for custodial establishments demonstrate ongoing concerns about their safety and about the impact on the children who are detained.

The low numbers of local children entering custody, reported above, is replicated across the south-west, meaning that there are no custodial establishments for children in our region. This means that all children in custody are located a considerable distance from home, making it harder for families to visit. DCYJS supports parents of children in custody, as well as the children themselves, helping them to cope with both the practicalities and the emotional impact of the situation.

DCYJS allocates paired case managers for all children in custody, to ensure resilience and shared reflection in the work with these children. A DCYJS nurse and a DCYJS education specialist are always allocated to children in custody to facilitate liaison with custody health care and education providers to help ensure that the child's specific educational and health needs can be met and to enable continuity of education and health care during and after the custodial period. DCYJS Speech and Language assessments are also shared with the custodial establishment to enable custody staff to communicate more effectively with the child.

Finding suitable accommodation for children leaving custody can be challenging. DCYJS contributes to local authority care planning processes, promoting the early identification of the child's release address. The DCYJS Manager reports to the DCYJS Partnership Board on the timeliness of accommodation being confirmed for children being released from custodial sentences. No children have reached their release date during 2021/22 so there is no current data to report.

While the national performance indicator relates to custodial sentences, there is also concern about the numbers of children being remanded into custody. In January 2022 the Ministry of Justice published a 'Review of Custodial Remand for Children' which noted that in 2021 about 45% of children in custody were on remand. During 2021/22

seven local children have been remanded in custody, an increase on the four custodial remands in the preceding year. Although there are some similarities among these remand cases, such as the seriousness of the alleged offences and in some cases the alleged commission of serious offences while on bail, each case has unique individual circumstances which require review. Of the seven cases, four remain on remand at the end of the year, two received a custodial sentence in excess of 12 months and one received a community sentence. Lack of suitable accommodation was a factor in the remand decision for this final case, concerns which DCYJS raised at the time.

### Over-representation

It is recognised nationally that some groups of children, such as those with diverse ethnic heritage, children in care and children with Special Educational Needs are over-represented in the youth justice system. Nationally, just over 50% of children in custody identify as having diverse ethnic heritage, significantly more than the proportion in the total population.

The low numbers of local children being sentenced to custody makes it difficult to provide sound statistical analysis of possible over-representation of young people with diverse ethnic heritage. In the year 2021/22 fewer than 5 young people from the BCP Council area were sentenced to custody and no young people from the Dorset Council area received a custodial sentence. DCYJS undertakes an informal review process for each child sentenced or remanded to custody, including attention being paid to possible over-representation of or differential response to minority groups.

First-Time Entrants information referred to above, relating to the analysis of local children entering the justice system, does not show over-representation of children with diverse ethnic heritage at this stage of the justice system. National reviews do show, however, that black children can be more likely to 'progress' through the justice system to receive more onerous sentences, for complex reasons including the point of entry into the justice system and differences in the assessment of risk. Learning from national reviews, such as the thematic inspection published in October 2021 on the experiences of black and mixed heritage boys in the justice system, is shared within the DCYJS team and applied to our practice.

The proportion of girls on the DCYJS caseload fluctuates but stays within a range of about 15%-20% of the total caseload, consistent with national rates. Worker allocation decisions are taken carefully to be sensitive to each girl's needs. In the context of the Violence Against Women and Girls agenda and concerns about peer on peer sexual abuse, DCYJS managers are currently reviewing good practice and resources used elsewhere to help us improve our work with girls. The emphasis of some of this work will be on work with boys to help them achieve healthy relationships and to reduce the risk they pose to girls. These developments are being undertaken with support from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

DCYJS also works with a small number of young people who are exploring their gender identity and may be in the process of gender reassignment. Given the low numbers and the emerging information and understanding in this area it is hard to assess the extent of possible over-representation of this group in the youth justice system. It is clear though that these young people face potential discrimination and are likely to have specific needs which require an individualised response. This is an area for the service to develop its practice in 2022/23.

The analysis of local First Time Entrants, summarised above, showed the high level of Special Educational Needs and school exclusions amongst younger children entering the justice system. These concerns fit with evidence collected by the DCYJS Speech and Language Therapists, showing high levels of communication needs amongst children in our local youth justice system. In most cases these needs have not been identified or formally assessed until the child meets with the DCYJS Speech and Language Therapist.

### Education, Training and Employment

Nationally and locally it is recognised that children in the youth justice system are less likely to stay in mainstream schools, to achieve good educational outcomes and to access education, employment or training after Year 11. Each local authority's Director of Education is a member of the DCYJS Partnership Board. DCYJS employs an Education Officer and a post-16 Careers Adviser who work with schools and local authorities to increase the suitability of provision and with young people to understand their needs and to support their attendance and engagement. The DCYJS ETE workers maintain strong links with colleagues in the Virtual Schools, the SEND teams and Inclusion services.

Information reported above, in the section on First Time Entrants, showed the frequency of Special Educational Needs and school exclusions among younger children entering the justice system. Similar issues prevail on the overall DCYJS caseload. In late 2021 the DCYJS Manager and the BCP Council Director of Education reported to the BCP Council Equalities Action Commission on rates of school exclusions and possible links to over-representation. The following table reflects the BCP Council children on the the DCYJS caseload in November 2021:

#### *BCP YJS cases November 2021*

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>No. on YJS caseload</b>	<b>Exclusions</b>	<b>Suspensions</b>	<b>Exclusions &amp; Suspensions</b>
White-British	81	16 (20%)	30 (37%)	46 (57%)
White-Other & White-Irish	6	1 (17%)	3 (50%)	4 (67%)
Mix WBA, WBC, Other	4	1 (25%)	2 (50%)	3 (75%)
All	91	18 (20%)	35 (38%)	53 (58%)

These figures indicate a high overall rate of permanent and fixed term exclusions on the YJS caseload, with a higher rate among mixed heritage children. It should though be noted that the low numbers in this group mean that a small change in numbers would have a large impact on the percentages.

Analysis of the DCYJS Dorset Council cases in March 2022 showed the following information about their education/training/employment status and their associated needs:

## Dorset YJS cases March 2022

Education, Training, Employment Status	Number	With EHCP	Open to Children's Social Care	Open to Early Help
<b>School age</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>
Mainstream school	7	0	1	2
Alternative Provision/PRU	12	4	7	2
Custody	1	1	1	0
<b>Post-16</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>
Employed	6	1	0	0
Further Education	5	1	0	0
NEET	10	3	4	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>

There is a higher rate of EHCPs and of contact with other children's services among those who are not in mainstream school and not in employment or further education. It should though be noted that those young people who are in school may be at risk of exclusion, needing support to avoid this outcome, and those who are in employment or at college may need help to maintain this status.

During the past year there have been low numbers of children receiving Elective Home Education. Successful work at individual case level means that in March 2022 there are no children on the YJS caseload who are designated as receiving Elective Home Education.

During 2021/22 DCYJS has started work to improve its data recording for ETE, to review the quality of joint work with local authority SEND services and with the Virtual Schools and to develop its options for post-16 young people who are NEET. These will continue to be priorities in 2022/23.

### Serious Violence and Exploitation

Tackling child exploitation and reducing serious violence are priorities for strategic partnerships in both our local authority areas (as described in section 5 of this Plan).

Most of the violent offences committed by children do not reach the 'serious violence' threshold. Analysis and comparison of youth justice outcomes in the 3-month periods December 2019–February 2020 and December 2021–February 2022 shows a reduction in violent offences being dealt with but a small increase in weapon-related offences.

Analysis of First Time Entrants, summarised earlier in this section, shows that more than half of BCP Council First Time Entrants aged 13 or younger in the last two years had committed offences involving weapons (possession of a knife in most instances). The equivalent data for Dorset Council First Time Entrants showed a lower number and proportion of weapon offences, featuring in 20% of the cases.

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2021 introduces a Serious Violence Duty for specified authorities, including youth justice services, to work together to share data

and knowledge, allowing them to target their interventions to prevent serious violence. As stated in section 5 above, tackling violence is a current priority for both our Community Safety Partnerships, and for the Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner. This Youth Justice Plan contributes to that shared local commitment and endeavour.

Child Exploitation occurs across the pan-Dorset area, with DCYJS seeing higher rates of exploitation amongst its BCP Council caseload. DCYJS plays an active role in the partnership arrangements in both local authority areas to address child exploitation, participating in the strategic and tactical groups as well as other multi-agency initiatives. At the operational level, DCYJS team members are part of multi-agency child exploitation case meetings and contribute to multi-agency responses to concerns about specific locations or networks.

Dorset Police, Children's Social Care services and DCYJS work together to refer suitable cases to the National Referral Mechanism. Delays in the Home Office response to these referrals can lead to repeated adjournments of court cases involving young people who have had NRM referrals. Such delays exacerbate problems with youth justice timeliness, which were a local focus prior to the pandemic and which were compounded by court closures and restrictions during the pandemic. Long delays in completing cases in the youth court and the crown court mean that children can remain subject to bail conditions for many months. With months passing between the offence and the court outcome there is also a deleterious effect on work to meet the needs of victims and to address a child's offending.

#### [Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements \(MAPPA\)](#)

DCYJS is an active participant in the local MAPPA Strategic Management Board and has established strong working links with the MAPPA Coordinator. MAPPA status reflects either the young person's offence and sentence or a risk assessment indicating that the young person poses a High Risk of Serious Harm to others and requires multi-agency risk management above that which is provided through the DCYJS Risk Assessment Panel process.

In March 2022 eight DCYJS cases, out of 129 on the caseload, had MAPPA status, with most of them being managed at Level One (ordinary agency risk management).

During 2021/22, in line with the refreshed national MAPPA Guidance, improvements were made to MAPPA transition processes. When MAPPA Level Two or Level Three risk management commences for a young adult who was previously known to DCYJS the MAPPA Coordinator seeks relevant information from DCYJS to aid risk management and a representative of DCYJS attends at least the initial MAPPA meeting.

#### [Health and Communication Needs](#)

It has long been recognised that young people in the youth justice system have significant and interacting health needs which may not have been adequately identified or addressed. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires youth offending teams to include specialist health staff. The DCYJS health team, funded mostly by NHS Dorset CCG and employed by Dorset HealthCare Trust, comprises a part-time Psychologist, 2.8 Youth Justice Nurses and 1.4 Speech and Language Therapists. The YJS Nurses are employed through CAMHS and combine expertise in child mental health and wellbeing



with wider nursing expertise in respect of physical health, sexual health and substance misuse.

During 2021/22 the DCYJS health team has supported the development of the service's trauma recovery model of working. Young people in the youth justice system have often experienced past trauma, such as witnessing domestic abuse, being the victims of physical abuse, neglect and emotional abuse, which affects their cognitive and emotional development. Understanding a child's trauma history, and its impact on their current presentation, in a context of concerns about child exploitation and serious violence, enables YJS workers to respond to the child's individual needs with the emphasis often being on helping to establish a positive and pro-social relationship. YJS Nurses work directly with young people, sometimes providing treatment for past trauma, as well as providing case consultations to other YJS team members.

The YJS Speech and Language Therapists also play an important role in the individualised response to each child. All children who receive a court order or a second 'Out of Court Disposal' are offered a speech and language assessment. As was noted in the DCYJS 2021/22 Youth Justice Plan, the evidence from these assessments is that about 80% of young people known to DCYJS have additional communication needs, with about 30% having significant needs such as Developmental Language Disorder. In most cases these needs have not been identified until the YJS start working with the child and complete a speech and language assessment.

#### [Support for parents of children in the youth justice system](#)

The parents and carers of children in the youth justice system have particular needs and challenges. Although the law holds children individually responsible from the age of 10 for criminal behaviour, parents may feel a sense of responsibility and there is often a family context to a child's behaviour. The difficult, complex emotions that parents feel in this situation require sensitive support. The youth justice system has specialist language and procedures which may be hard for parents to understand and navigate.

DCYJS employs parenting workers to provide support directly to parents, working in partnership with colleagues who support the young person. This work is aimed at helping families to restore and repair relationships and to support children's positive achievements.

The DCYJS parenting workers also provide assistance with the challenges of the youth justice system. Feedback from parents has shown that they may not understand what takes place in the youth court. For the small number who have a child in custody there are numerous practical challenges to face, as well as the emotional impact of the separation from their child and the concern about their child's welfare.

During 2021/22 the team have developed their focus on working with both parents, including absent parents, recognising the importance of fathers as well as mothers and responding to messages from serious case and learning reviews about the need to include both parents. DCYJS raised concerns this year with the YJB about the AssetPlus self-assessment process only seeking and recording the views of one parent. The team seeks the views of both parents whenever possible and working with both parents will continue to be a focus in 2022/23.



## Restorative Justice and Victims

One of the challenges for DCYJS during 2021/22 has been achieving the correct balance between meeting the needs of the child, as described in the previous section, and meeting the needs of the child's victim. The DCYJS Restorative Justice Practitioners contact every victim of children who work with the service, seeking to find out about the impact of the offence and to seek opportunities for Restorative Justice activities.

Delays in the youth justice system, which are more common in cases that go to court, make it harder to engage victims in activity to repair the harm they have experienced. The DCYJS Restorative Justice Practitioners exercise tact and sensitivity in their contacts with victims, emphasising the victim's choice in whether or how much they engage with our service.

The Covid pandemic has exacerbated court delays and has also restricted the opportunities for face to face Restorative Justice meetings. During 2021/22 some Restorative Justice Conferences have taken place face to face, some have been conducted virtually and in some cases it has not been possible to find a suitable and safe way to hold the meeting.

An area of development in 2021/22 has been the 'standardised approach'. This is the local name given to victim work with emergency workers, following offences such as 'assault emergency worker'. Police officers and other emergency workers make up a high proportion of the YJS victim caseload but may be reluctant to participate in Restorative Justice. As well as seeking ways to increase their participation, the YJS Restorative Justice Practitioners have worked with the YJS Police Officers to develop other ways to help young people to understand the impact of their behaviour on emergency workers and to look for ways for young people to repair the harm caused.

In early 2022 DCYJS's lead manager for Restorative Justice surveyed the views of other team members about their knowledge, confidence and enjoyment of Restorative Justice work. There is a high level of commitment to Restorative Justice in the team. The survey identified some specific areas for development which will form part of our plans for 2022/23.

## 9. National Standards

Youth justice services are required to comply with minimum national standards. The latest edition of national standards, 'Standards for Children in Youth Justice Services', was published in 2019. The YJB mandates youth justice services to undertake periodic self-assessments of their compliance with national standards.

The last national standards self-assessment was completed in March 2020. DCYJS demonstrated adherence to the standards with a small number of standards requiring further activity in order to strengthen compliance.

The following areas of activity were identified for further development:

- Development of local strategies to prevent children from becoming involved in crime or anti-social behaviour
- Multi-agency analysis of disproportionality in court and out of court contexts for local children

- Evidencing strategic partner confidence in the YJS supervision of children on justice outcomes in the community
- Holding local partners to account for their part in the successful transition and resettlement of children released from custody
- Consistent recording/storage of sentence plans.

These actions were reported to the DCYJS Partnership Board and were added to DCYJS team plans. Progress has been made in all these areas though some of these activities are outside the direct control of DCYJS. Continuing actions are identified for each of the above issues, to develop or audit the progress made.

## 10. Challenges, risks and issues

Like other youth justice services, DCYJS operates in a context of system challenges and resource pressures. Achievement of the service's priorities in 2022/23 could be affected by a number of risks and issues, including:

- Funding and resources – in cash terms the DCYJS budget was £261K smaller in 2021/22 than it had been in 2014/15, before allowing for inflation and pay increases during that period. Continuing budget pressures and inflation risks make this a continuing challenge.
- Children's Services face a number of challenges, nationally and locally, with the shortage of suitable placements for children in care being of particular relevance to youth justice services. Without suitable placements it is difficult to establish the building blocks to help children build positive futures, such as education, health care and positive peer networks.
- Delays in the youth justice system, linked to pressures in the wider criminal justice system and exacerbated by Covid, make it harder to engage victims in Restorative Justice and to work effectively with young people to prevent future offending.
- The impact of Covid on young people is still emerging, including setbacks to young people's education and their mental health. These issues may contribute to negative effects on children's behaviour, increasing the likelihood of substance misuse, exploitation and offending.

The DCYJS service plan for 2022/23 will continue to address these issues, making best use of resources, working with partners to mitigate the impact of placement shortages, developing plans to improve timeliness in our local youth court system and responding to the education and mental health needs of children following the pandemic.

## 11. Service improvement plan

The DCYJS service plan and strategic priorities for 2022/23 have been developed in the context of all the information summarised in the preceding sections of this document.

The service's plan and priorities also reflect learning from self-assessments, case audits, learning reviews and inspection reports during 2021/22.

### Self-assessment:

DCYJS is currently awaiting inspection. HMI Probation is entering the fifth year of a six-year inspection programme of all youth offending teams in England and Wales. DCYJS has not yet been inspected during this programme.

As part of preparations for inspection, in 2021 DCYJS updated a self-assessment for 'Domain One' of the inspection framework, relating to the arrangements underpinning the service's Organisational Delivery. The service has been working on areas for improvement identified in the self-assessment including:

- Some aspects of the DCYJS Board's work, including Board members advocating for youth justice issues in other parts of their work
- Improving the collection and use of data to inform performance and service improvement
- Improving links with other local children's services electronic case management systems
- Some Equality Act 'protected characteristics' need further work.

#### Case audit:

DCYJS undertakes a detailed case audit each year, using the youth justice inspection criteria. The audit in 2021 identified good practice in building relationships with young people, despite the restrictions caused by the pandemic. Areas for improvement were identified in:

- More work to be done on making assessments, plans and interventions accessible, collaborative (with young people, parents and with other professionals) and responsive to discrimination
- Work to do on clarifying and aligning reparation activities, unpaid work, employability options and constructive activities, including links to community organisations.

#### Learning reviews and inspection reports:

DCYJS takes part in local multi-agency learning reviews under both the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children's Partnership and the MAPPA Strategic Management Board. During 2021/22 the DCYJS Manager chaired the review panel for a Child Safeguarding Practice Review in the Dorset Council area and the review panel for a MAPPA Serious Case Review in Bournemouth.

Relevant issues identified in local learning reviews this year include:

- High quality transition arrangements for young people moving to adult services
- The importance of persistence in building positive relationships with young people
- Joint work across youth justice services for children in care placed out of area
- Identifying possible needs and risks for younger siblings when working with a child in the justice system
- Safe ways to manage risk within teenage intimate relationships.

HMI Probation published one thematic inspection report relating to youth justice work this year. The report on the experiences of black and mixed heritage boys in the youth justice system has been mentioned above. The DCYJS Team Plan for 2021/22 was updated to include the recommendations from this report and work in these areas will continue in 2022/23.

HMI Probation continued to publish inspection reports into individual youth justice services during 2021/22, summarised in their Annual Report in March 2022: [2021 Annual Report: \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/2021-annual-report/).

### Views of DCYJS Board members, team members and service users:

Information relating to the service's performance, progress on past plans, learning from local and other case reviews and inspection reports and the priorities of other local strategic partnerships were reported and discussed with the DCYJS Board in January 2022 and with the DCYJS team in February 2022. The views of service users were collected during the year, with particular attention paid to the messages from the view-seeking work with young people in custody. Those conversations identified the following strategic priorities for our youth justice partnership in 2022/23.

## Strategic Priorities for 2022-23

The work of the service is underpinned by commitments to repairing harm to victims and children, to helping children to build positive identities and futures and to the 'Child First' ethos of the Youth Justice Board. All of these commitments depend on the team's ability to build positive relationships with children, parents/carers, victims, other professionals and each other.

The DCYJS strategic priorities can be grouped under the following headings:

- System improvement
- Practice improvement

### System Improvement

#### Continue to reduce the rate of local children entering the justice system

- Allocate Youth Justice Worker time to support children who are diverted from formal youth justice outcomes
- Develop multi-agency understanding and plans to avoid children aged 10-13 entering the justice system
- Work with Dorset Police on the next steps of their youth diversion work, including the outcome of research into the impact of formal and informal out of court disposals in recent years
- Confirm local multi-agency arrangements to ensure that children identified for early concerns over anti-social behaviour have any additional needs recognised and addressed.

#### Continue to address over-representation of minority groups in the youth justice system

- Implement the recommendations from the thematic inspection into the experiences of black and mixed heritage boys in the justice system
- Monitor the experiences and outcomes for young people in our youth justice system with diverse heritage and take action to reduce the risk of them entering custody

- Develop data recording and reporting to identify different groups at possible risk of over-representation, such as more specific ethnicity information, disability, care status, SEND
- Cross-reference youth justice disproportionality issues with other relevant outcomes for children, such as school exclusion, experiencing exploitation, contact with social care services
- Develop the YJS response to children with gender identity issues
- Continue to share with partners the findings from DCYJS view-seeking work with young people in custody
- Work with local authority SEND and Virtual School partners to self-assess our joint work and develop action plans as required.

### Continue to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of the local youth justice system

- Work with HMCTS to shorten the time between charge and first hearing dates for youth cases
- Co-produce with magistrates, young people and parents a guide to the local youth courts so that young people and their parents/carers are better prepared for court and better included in the work of the court
- Work with defence solicitors to share the findings from view-seeking work with young people to improve communication and the effectiveness of legal advice
- Provide police colleagues with training in the communication needs of young people in the justice system and suitable communication techniques
- Strengthen the support for young adults in the justice system by working jointly with local authority leaving care services, SEND services and the Probation Service.

### Practice Improvement

#### Make our assessments, plans and interventions more accessible, collaborative and responsive to discrimination

- Agree with young people a better format for intervention plans, with advice from the DCYJS Speech and Language Therapists, to be used across all DCYJS work
- Change the format of DCYJS Referral Order Initial Panel reports to present the information about the child before the information about the offence
- Support DCYJS staff to write assessments, plans and reports in 'Easy Read' style
- Work with young people to understand their experiences of discrimination and its impact on their identity
- Meet with young people and their parents/carers to go through reports and seek their views before court appearances or Referral Order panel meetings
- Include the views of young people and their parents/carers in team case audit activities.

## Clarify and align activities to repair harm, increase employability and to support pro-social interests and activities, including links to community organisations

- Review the team's approach to our work with young people to help them repair the harm from their offence
- Clarify the overlaps and distinctions between work to repair harm, Unpaid Work, employability courses and constructive activities
- Agree a budget to support children to access positive pro-social activities, building on their strengths and interests, that can be continued after DCYJS involvement ends
- Build links with a wider range of community organisations to increase the service's ability to find the right activities for children's varying interests and skills.

## Workforce Development

The DCYJS Workforce Development Policy identifies core training for different roles in the team. As well as refresher training in child safeguarding, child exploitation and information governance, team members have also completed training in Motivational Interviewing, AIM3 Harmful Sexual Behaviour assessments and Restorative Justice with complex and sensitive cases.

In addition to these core training courses, which will continue to be attended and updated in 2022/23, the service's development plans require staff training in the following areas:

- Trauma-informed practice – refresher training for all practitioner staff, initial training for new staff
- MAPPA and the management of risk – refresher training for all practitioner staff
- 'Easy Read' – support from the team's Speech and Language Therapists to help team members write assessments, plans and reports in an 'easy read' style
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities – use our joint self-assessment process with local authority colleagues to identify training needs in respect of SEND
- Self-harm and suicide risk – DCYJS health team to support colleagues in their assessment and response to self-harm and suicide risks.

Working in youth justice has perhaps never been as demanding as in the last two years, with the Covid pandemic not only affecting our service users but also our team members. Supporting the wellbeing of our staff and volunteers will continue to be a priority in 2022/23, attending to relationships within the team as well as with children, parents/carers, victims and other professionals.

## Board Development

As mentioned above, the DCYJS inspection self-assessment identified some areas where the work of the Partnership Board could be strengthened. In December 2021 the Youth Justice Board published updated guidance for YJS Partnership Boards, 'Youth Justice Service Governance and Leadership'.

In addition to its quarterly meetings, the DCYJS Partnership Board will hold a development session in June 2022 to review the key messages from the national



guidance and from the local self-assessment, as well as taking time to consider the service's priorities and arrangements for the coming years.

Details of the current membership and attendance of the DCYJS Partnership Board are included in Appendix One.

## 12. Evidence-based practice and innovation

DCYJS service developments in recent years have included the addition of Speech and Language expertise to the team in 2018 and the implementation of the Trauma Recovery Model in 2020. Both these developments reflected growing evidence about the specific needs of children in the youth justice system.

One of the messages from our conversations with local young people who have been sentenced or remanded to custody was that the crucial and memorable element for them was their relationship with their YJS worker, not the interventions and resources used by the worker. This echoes evidence that has accrued over the years, in a number of settings, that the quality of the relationship is the most important factor in supporting positive change. Building a balanced, trusting and consistent working relationship with a child in the youth justice system is not innovative but it is skilled, difficult and evidence-based work. Understanding a child's communication needs and the impact of their past experiences increases the chances of success in this work.

During 2021/22, working in the context of the Covid pandemic, DCYJS have introduced practice improvements to increase the effectiveness of our work including:

- Semi-structured interviews with young people who have been in custody to gain their views about how DCYJS and other local services could improve our work
- Use of virtual working to strengthen links between DCYJS practitioners and children in care placed out of our area
- Improved transition arrangements for young people entering adult services, supported by the DCYJS Probation Officer
- Increasing and diversifying DCYJS Police Officers' contacts with young people and parents to build trust
- Development of a DCYJS approach to improve restorative work for offences against emergency workers
- Increased use and consistent format for trauma-informed case consultations with the DCYJS health team
- Changing DCYJS practice to hold multi-agency Risk Assessment Panels for all weapons offences, not just those where the child is assessed as posing a High Risk of Serious Harm to others.

## 13. Looking forward

The strategic priorities and plans for the DCYJS partnership are set out in section 11. A more detailed action plan is used within the service to support this work.

While noting the concerns, risks and issues described in section 10 of this document, the intention of the DCYJS Partnership Board and the DCYJS staff group is that the coming year will see further improvements in the number of children entering the justice system, in how young people from over-represented groups are treated in our local youth justice system and in the efficiency and quality of our partnership work. For those young people

who do require support from DCYJS we will work collaboratively with them, making it easier for them to engage with our service and supporting them to access activities that will enable them to repair harm, enhance their education and skills and develop their strengths and abilities.

### 14. Sign off, submission and approval

Chair of YJS Board - name	Theresa Leavy
Signature	
Date	

### 15. Appendix 1

The following table shows the membership and attendance of the DCYJS Partnership Board:

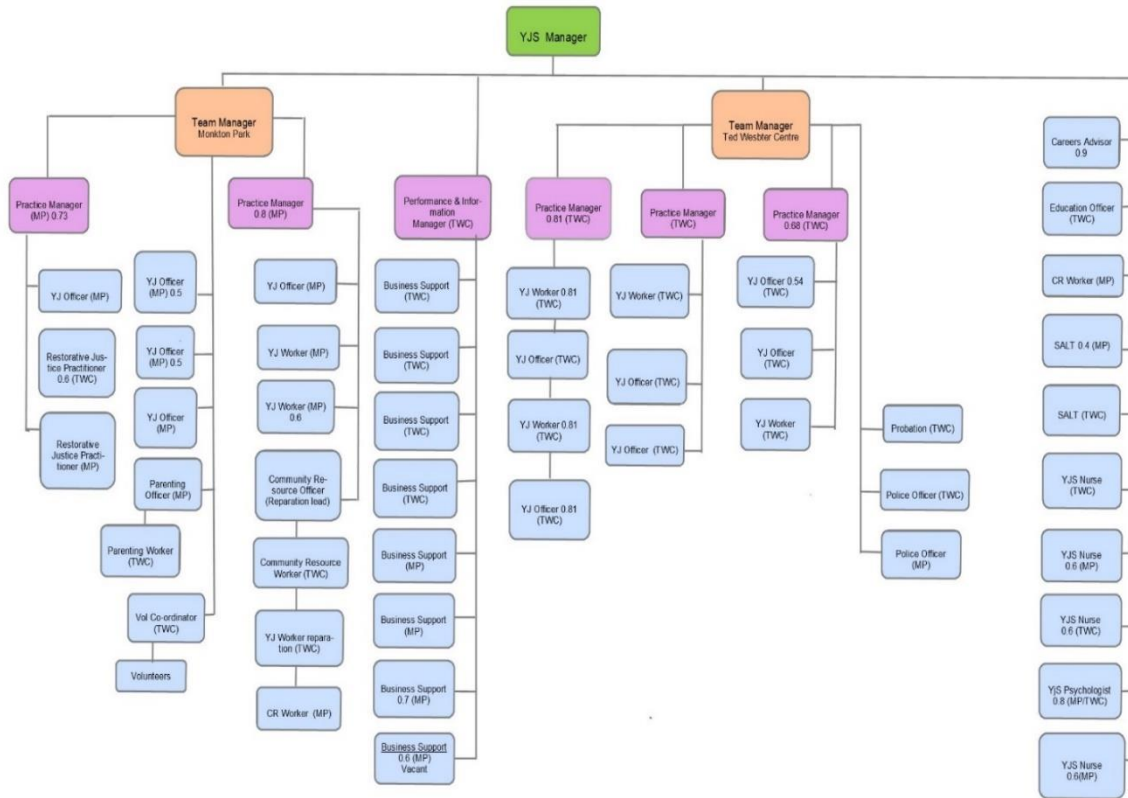
Organisation	Current Post Holder	Board Member	Title	23/04/2021	16/07/2021	05/11/2021	21/01/2022	Key
Ansbury	Nicola Newman	Y	Chief Executive, Ansbury Guidance	Attendance	Non attendance	N/A	N/A	Membership ceased in July 2021
BCP Council DCS	Elaine Redding	Y	Corporate Director Children's Services	Attendance	Attendance	Non attendance	Deputy sent	
BCP Council CSC	Brian Relph/Jane White	Y	Head of Children & Young People Social Care	Attendance	Attendance	Attendance	Attendance	
BCP Council Education	Sarah Rempel	Y	Director, Family and Inclusion Services, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council	N/A	N/A	Attendance	Deputy sent	
BCP Council Finance	Stephen MacDonald/Jo Collis-Heavens	Y	Senior Accountant, Children's Services	Attendance	Attendance	Attendance	Attendance	
Clinical Commissioning Group	Elaine Hurl	Y	Senior Commissioning Manager, Mental Health	Non attendance	Attendance	Non attendance	Non attendance	
Dorset Council DCS	Theresa Leavy (Chair)	Y	Executive Director for People - Children	Attendance	Attendance	Deputy sent	Attendance	
Dorset Council CSC	Sarah-Jane Smedmor	Y	Corporate Director Care and Protection	Attendance	Attendance	Attendance	Attendance	
Dorset Council Education	Mark Blackman/Vik Verma	N	Corporate Director, Education and Learning	Attendance	Non attendance	Attendance	Non attendance	
Dorset Healthcare Trust	Lisa White/Clare Hurley	Y	Clinical Services Manager, Bournemouth & Christchurch CAMHS	Attendance	Attendance	Attendance	Attendance	
Dorset Magistrates Youth Panel chair	Caroline Foster	Y	Chair, Dorset Magistrates Youth Panel	Attendance	Attendance	Attendance	Attendance	
Dorset Police	Jan Steadman	Y	Head of Criminal Justice and Custody	Attendance	Attendance	Non attendance	Attendance	
Dorset Police	Kerry Shelley	Y	Head of Youth Services / Acting Inspector, Dorset Police Youth Justice Team	Attendance	Attendance	Attendance	Attendance	
HM Court Services	Jane Dunmall	Y	Legal Advisor	Non attendance	Attendance	N/A	N/A	Membership cased July 2021
National Probation Service	Toni Shepherd	Y	National Probation Service Dorset	Non attendance	Attendance	Deputy sent	Attendance	
Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner	Lewis Gool/Helen Fletcher	Y	Grants and Commissioning Officer	Attendance	Non attendance	Attendance	Attendance	
Public Health Dorset	Nicky Cleave	Y	Assistant Director for Public Health	Attendance	Attendance	Attendance	Attendance	
YJS BCP Council	David Webb	Y	Service Manager, Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service	Attendance	Attendance	Attendance	Attendance	
Youth Justice Board	Kate Langley	Y	Head of Innovation and Engagement YJB and Head of South-West and South-Central regions	Attendance	Attendance	Non attendance	Non attendance	



## 16. Appendix 2 – Service Structure Chart

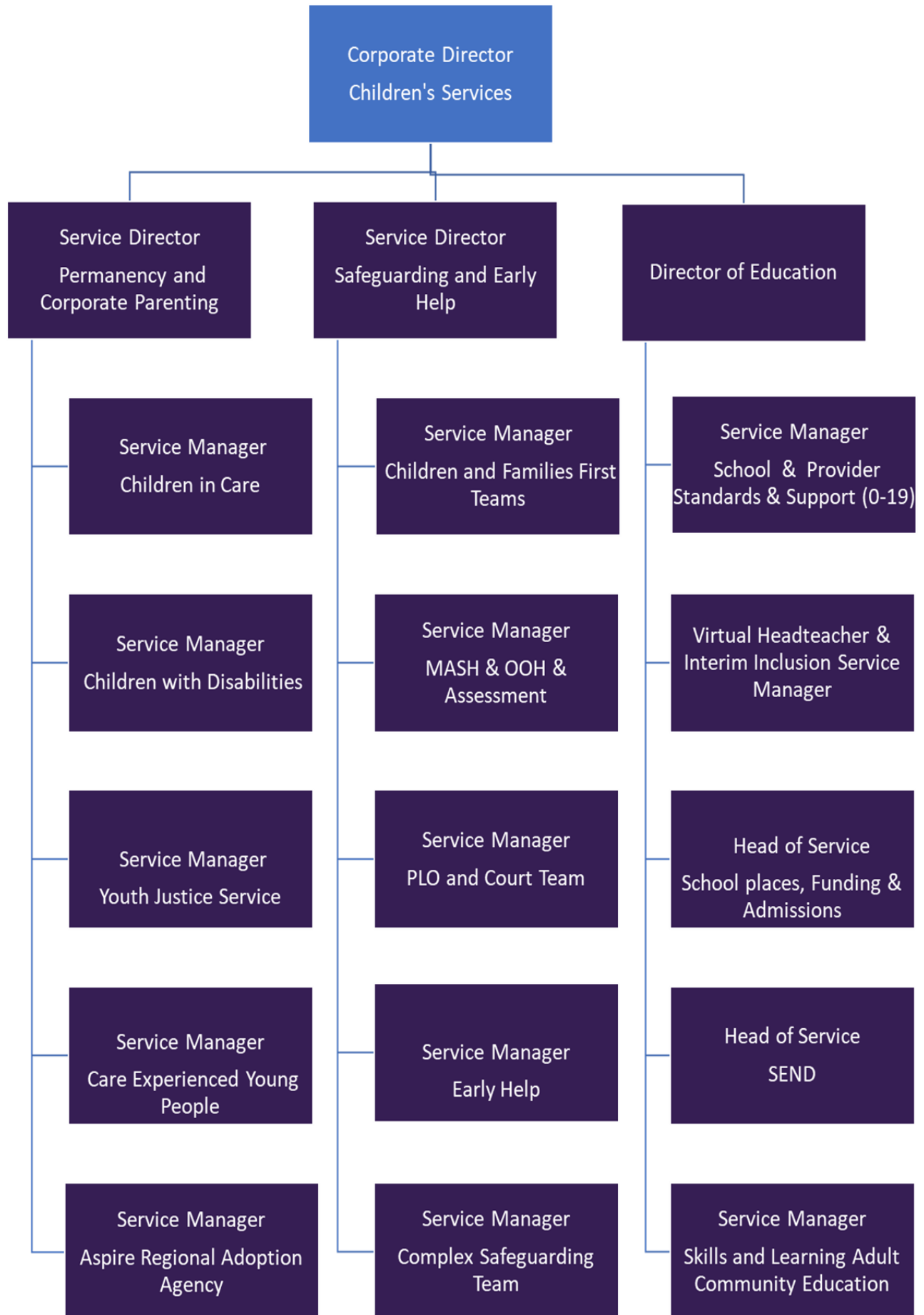
The following structure charts show the staffing structure of Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service and where the service sits in the two local authorities.

Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service - YJS Structure



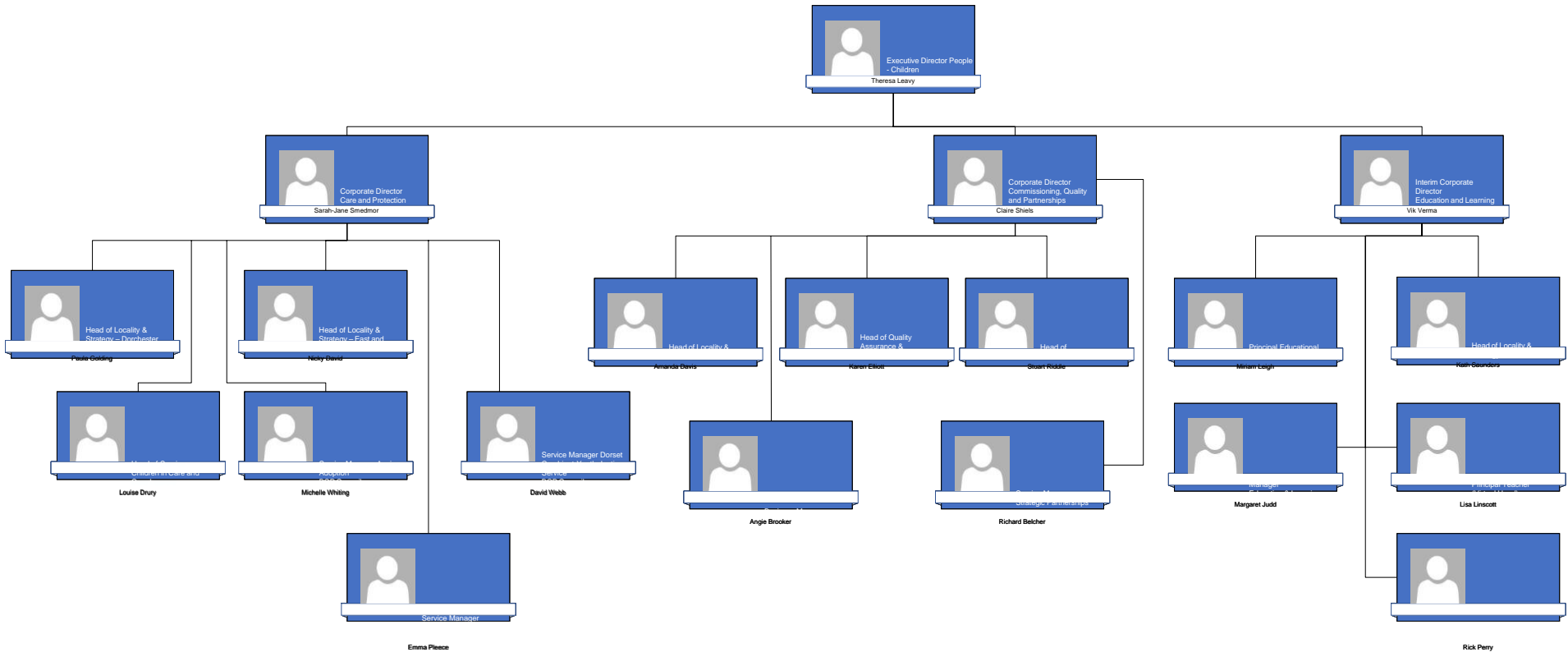
Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service January 2022

BCP Council Children's Services Extended Leadership Team:



Dorset Council Children's Services Extended Leadership Team:

### Children's Services Extended Leadership Team



### DCYJS Staff and Volunteers:

The following table shows the gender and ethnicity of DCYJS staff members and volunteers:

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Female staff members</b>	<b>Male staff members</b>	<b>Female volunteers</b>	<b>Male volunteers</b>	<b>Total</b>
White British	38	11	13	6	68
White Other	1	1	1	1	4
Mixed Heritage	1	0	0	0	1

Five staff members in DCYJS are recorded as having a disability.

**Common youth justice terms**  
**Please add any locally used terminology**

<b>ACE</b>	Adverse childhood experience. Events in the child's life that can have negative, long lasting impact on the child's health, and life choices
<b>AIM 2 and 3</b>	Assessment, intervention and moving on, an assessment tool and framework for children who have instigated harmful sexual behaviour
<b>ASB</b>	Anti social behaviour
<b>AssetPlus</b>	Assessment tool to be used for children who have been involved in offending behaviour
<b>CAMHS</b>	Child and adolescent mental health services
<b>CCE</b>	Child Criminal exploitation, where a child is forced, through threats of violence, or manipulated to take part in criminal activity
<b>Children</b>	We define a child as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. This is in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and civil legislation in England and Wales. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.
<b>Child First</b>	A system wide approach to working with children in the youth justice system. There are four tenants to this approach, it should be: developmentally informed, strength based, promote participation, and encourage diversion
<b>Child looked-after</b>	Child Looked After, where a child is looked after by the local authority
<b>CME</b>	Child Missing Education
<b>Constructive resettlement</b>	The principle of encouraging and supporting a child's positive identity development from pro-offending to pro-social
<b>Contextual safeguarding</b>	An approach to safeguarding children which considers the wider community and peer influences on a child's safety
<b>Community resolution</b>	Community resolution, an informal disposal, administered by the police, for

	low level offending where there has been an admission of guilt
<b>EHCP</b>	Education and health care plan, a plan outlining the education, health and social care needs of a child with additional needs
<b>ETE</b>	Education, training or employment
<b>EHE</b>	Electively home educated, children who are formally recorded as being educated at home and do not attend school
<b>EOTAS</b>	Education other than at school, children who receive their education away from a mainstream school setting
<b>FTE</b>	First Time Entrant. A child who receives a statutory criminal justice outcome for the first time (youth caution, youth conditional caution, or court disposal)
<b>HMIP</b>	Her Majesty Inspectorate of Probation. An independent arms-length body who inspect Youth Justice services and probation services
<b>HSB</b>	Harmful sexual behaviour, developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour by children, which is harmful to another child or adult, or themselves
<b>JAC</b>	Junior Attendance Centre
<b>MAPPA</b>	Multi agency public protection arrangements
<b>MFH</b>	Missing from Home
<b>NRM</b>	National Referral Mechanism. The national framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery in order to gain help to support and protect them
<b>OOCD</b>	Out-of-court disposal. All recorded disposals where a crime is recorded, an outcome delivered but the matter is not sent to court
<b>Outcome 22/21</b>	An informal disposal, available where the child does not admit the offence, but they undertake intervention to build strengths to minimise the possibility of further offending
<b>Over-represented children</b>	Appearing in higher numbers than the local or national average
<b>RHI</b>	Return home Interviews. These are interviews completed after a child has been reported missing
<b>SLCN</b>	Speech, Language and communication needs
<b>STC</b>	Secure training centre

<b>SCH</b>	Secure children's home
<b>Young adult</b>	We define a young adult as someone who is 18 or over. For example, when a young adult is transferring to the adult probation service.
<b>YJS</b>	Youth Justice Service. This is now the preferred title for services working with children in the youth justice system. This reflects the move to a child first approach
<b>YOI</b>	Young offender institution