

PLACE AND RESOURCES OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

NOTES OF INFORMAL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 10 NOVEMBER 2021

Present: Cllrs Les Fry (Vice-Chairman), Mike Barron, Pauline Batstone, Toni Coombs, Sherry Jespersen, Carole Jones, Val Potheary, Andrew Starr and Roland Tarr

Apologies: Cllr R Hope

Also present: Cllr Tony Alford, Cllr Jon Andrews, Cllr Ray Bryan, Cllr Robin Cook, Cllr Jean Dunseith, Cllr Spencer Flower, Cllr Simon Gibson, Cllr Barry Goringe, Cllr Ryan Holloway, Cllr Rob Hughes, Cllr Nick Ireland, Cllr Andrew Kerby, Cllr Rebecca Knox, Cllr Nocturin Lacey-Clarke, Cllr Laura Miller, Cllr Louie O'Leary, Cllr Molly Rennie, Cllr Jane Somper, Cllr Gary Suttle, Cllr David Taylor and Cllr David Walsh

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

John Sellgren (Executive Director, Place), Aidan Dunn (Executive Director - Corporate Development S151), Jonathan Mair (Corporate Director - Legal & Democratic Service Monitoring Officer), John Newcombe (Service Manager, Licensing & Community Safety), Graham Duggan (Head of Community & Public Protection), Katie Hale (Head of Revenues and Benefits), Lisa Cotton (Head of Customer Services, Libraries & Archives), James Potten (Communications Business Partner - Place) and Lindsey Watson (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

L Fry (Vice-chairman) in the Chair.

The Chairman provided the following statement:

'In the light of the situation with Covid-19 case rates, Dorset Council's Chief Executive - Matt Prosser has exercised his delegated powers to continue to hold virtual informal committee meetings.

Where a decision is required, committee members will express a 'minded to' decision in respect of recommendations set out in officer reports, with decisions being taken under officer delegated authority in the light of 'minded to' decisions expressed by members in the virtual meetings. Any decisions or recommendations required will be confirmed by the appropriate officer at the conclusion of the committee's debate on an agenda item.'

The Chairman noted that the committee needed to appoint a Vice-chairman for the meeting. It was proposed by S Jespersen seconded by T Coombs that

C Jones be elected Vice-chairman for the meeting. This was supported by the committee.

35. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

36. Public Participation

There were no questions or statements from members of the public or local organisations.

37. Questions from Members

There were no questions submitted by councillors.

38. Anti-social Behaviour related Public Spaces Protection Orders

The committee received and considered a report of the Service Manager, Licensing and Community Safety with regard to proposals for Anti-social Behaviour related Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) for parts of the Dorset Council area. The report set out current PSPOs which were in place and which had been reviewed in consultation with statutory consultees. The committee was invited to review the revised draft orders in advance of a period of public consultation.

Discussion was held on the proposals and the following points were noted:

- Detail provided of the Community Safety Patrol Service operated in Weymouth and Portland
- Further discussion would be required in respect of enforcement issues
- A 'gating' proposal associated with Trinity Passage in Weymouth would form part of the public consultation
- The proposals did not seek to ban camping in coastal areas but would provide the ability to enforce and move people on where anti-social behaviour occurred
- Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue strongly supported the proposed order concerning fires on open land
- Further discussion would take place with Forestry England and information would be provided when the committee considered the proposed orders in February 2022
- The content of signage to be used in forest/open land areas was discussed.

It was proposed by S Jespersen seconded by R Tarr

'Minded to' Decision

That the Place and Resources Overview Committee:

- 1) Have considered the proposals for Anti-social Behaviour related Public Spaces Protection Orders for parts of the Dorset Council area
- 2) Support the draft Orders for publication for public consultation the results from which will help shape the final Orders.

The Executive Director of Place, having heard the debate, confirmed the 'minded to' decision, under delegated powers on behalf of the informal meeting of the Place and Resources Overview Committee.

39. **The future of revenues and benefits services at Dorset Council**

The Chairman noted that there were two exempt appendices associated with the report and that the committee would need to resolve to move into exempt business if councillors wished to discuss these.

The Executive Director of Corporate Development introduced a report which set out proposals for the future provision of revenues and benefits services for Dorset Council. The report recommended the creation of a single revenues and benefits service for Dorset Council, to provide a better level of customer service for residents, with a single process and contact details, making it easier, clearer and more accessible for people to pay council tax and make benefits claims. A short film was shown to the committee to set out the vision for future customer service.

Consideration was given to the issues arising from the report and during discussion the following points were raised:

- Opportunities to integrate council services
- Discussion around potential timescale for operation on single customer accounts – work was ongoing and timescales would be managed through the transformation programme
- A request was made for a councillor webinar on this area of work
- A point was noted that Overview should keep a watch on debt recovery issues in the council
- Arrangements for scrutiny of the revenues and benefits service moving forward. Recommendation 3 in the report recognised the role of the Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee in this area and it was noted that performance could be incorporated into recommendation 3
- The movement of the eastern and northern areas onto the new system would be carefully managed
- Further discussions would need to be held, including around financial implications, once the report had been through the democratic processes.

It was proposed by V Potheary seconded by C Jones

It was noted that the additional words 'and performance' would be included in recommendation 3.

'Minded to' Recommendation to Cabinet

1. Agree that Dorset Council makes the necessary arrangements to leave the Stour Valley & Poole Partnership (SVPP) and brings these services in-house to be delivered by an expanded Dorset Council Revenues & Benefits Team as set out in the business case attached to the report at appendix 3;
2. Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Corporate Development, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy, to implement recommendation 1, including authority to give notice to terminate the Council's involvement in the Stour Valley and Poole Partnership;
3. Request that the Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee oversee the future Service's integration into Dorset Council, where it can support further transformation, insight, strategic service development and performance, as set out in the business case.

The Executive Director of Corporate Development, having heard the debate, confirmed the 'minded to' Recommendation to Cabinet, under delegated powers on behalf of the informal meeting of the Place and Resources Overview Committee.

40. Urgent items

There were no urgent items.

41. Exempt Business

The committee did not go into exempt business at this meeting.

42. The future of revenues and benefits services at Dorset Council - exempt appendices

The exempt appendices associated with the report 'The future of revenues and benefits services at Dorset Council' had been made available to members of the committee, however, the committee did not move into exempt business in order to discuss the information at the meeting.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 - 11.20 am

Chairman

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