



People and Health Overview Committee

Date: Tuesday, 17 October 2023
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Council Chamber, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

Members (Quorum: 3)

Mike Parkes (Chairman), Cathy Lugg (Vice-Chairman), Tony Alford, Pauline Batstone, Jean Dunseith, Beryl Ezzard, Ryan Holloway, Stella Jones, Rebecca Knox and Howard Legg

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

For more information about this agenda please contact Democratic Services Meeting Contact 01305 224185 - george.dare@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.

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Agenda

Item	Pages
1. APOLOGIES	
To receive any apologies for absence.	
2. 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.	

3. MINUTES

5 - 8

To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2023.

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 either 1 question or 1 statement for each meeting. You are welcome to attend the meeting in person or via Microsoft Teams to read out your question and to receive the response. If you submit a statement for the committee this will be circulated to all members of the committee in advance of the meeting as a supplement to the agenda and appended to the minutes for the formal record but will not be read out at the meeting. **The first 8 questions and the first 8 statements received from members of the public or organisations for each meeting will be accepted on a first come first served basis in accordance with the deadline set out below.** For further information read [Public Participation - Dorset Council](#)

All submissions must be emailed in full to george.dare@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk by 8.30am on Thursday, 12 October 2023.

When submitting your question or statement please note that:

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

5. COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS

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 george.dare@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk by 8.30am on Thursday, 12 October 2023.

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

6. 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.

7. COMMITTEE'S WORK PROGRAMME AND CABINET'S FORWARD PLAN 9 - 28

To consider the Committee's Work Programme and the Executive Forward Plans.

8. ADULTS & HOUSING DIRECTORATE PEER REVIEW AND ACTION PLAN 29 - 60

To consider a report of the Programme Lead- Quality Assurance.

9. ADOPTING CARE EXPERIENCE AS A PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC 61 - 68

To consider a report by the Corporate Director for Care & Protection and the Youth Voice Manager.

10. THE FAMILIES FIRST FOR CHILDREN PATHFINDER DELIVERING THE GOVERNMENT'S STABLE HOMES, BUILT ON LOVE STRATEGY 69 - 76

To receive a report by the Corporate Director for Care and Protection.

11. REPORT ON THE DORSET EDUCATION BOARD 77 - 86

To consider a report by the Corporate Director for Education and Learning.

12. EXPANSION OF FUNDED CHILDCARE OFFER FROM APRIL 2024 87 - 96

To receive a report by the Principal Lead for Best Start in Life.

13. 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 are no exempt items scheduled for this meeting.



PEOPLE AND HEALTH OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 2023

Present: Cllrs Mike Parkes (Chairman), Cathy Lugg (Vice-Chairman), Tony Alford, Jean Dunseith, Beryl Ezzard, Ryan Holloway, Stella Jones, Rebecca Knox and Howard Legg

Apologies: Cllrs Pauline Batstone

Also present: Cllr Jane Somper

Also present remotely: Cllr Cherry Brooks

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

George Dare (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Amanda Davis (Corporate Director for Education and Learning), Julia Ingram (Corporate Director for Adult Social Care Operations), Theresa Leavy (Executive Director of People - Children), Claire Shiels (Corporate Director - Commissioning & Partnerships), Tony McDougal (Communications Business Partner - Adults and Housing), Joshua Kennedy (Apprentice Democratic Services Officer), Kelly Henry (Interim Head of Placement Commissioning) and Karen Stephens (Interim Head of Service - Market Relationships, Major Contracts, and Over 65's)

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

Mark Rogers (Independent Chair, Birth to Settled Adulthood Board)

19. **Apologies**

An apology for absence was received from Cllr Pauline Batstone.

20. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

21. **Minutes**

Proposed by Cllr Holloway, seconded by Cllr Ezzard.

Decision

That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2023 be confirmed and signed.

22. **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

23. Councillor Questions

There were no questions from councillors.

24. Urgent Items

There were no urgent items.

25. Committee's Work Programme and Cabinet's Forward Plan

There were no comments from the committee on the work programme or the Cabinet Forward Plan.

Several items had been added to the work programme since the previous meeting.

26. Ofsted Regulation of Supported Accommodation for 16-17 Year Olds

The Corporate Director for Commissioning and Partnerships introduced the report and gave a presentation which is attached to these minutes. The presentation outlined supported accommodation, the reasons for policy change and the approach to this in Dorset, the new requirements including registration of providers, and the financial implications.

Committee members discussed and report and asked questions of the officers. The following points were raised:

- Grant funding from the Department for Education was £330,000 which would be given to the council in four equal instalments.
- Part of the Ofsted inspection regime included talking to children and young people.
- There was an open consultation on the Ofsted inspection so there may be changes to the inspection as a result of this consultation.
- Social workers and personal advisors would work with young people when they turn 18.
- There was a one-off registration fee for registering the supported accommodation.
- There was a risk in the Ofsted inspection process when they would inspect the head office and not the supported accommodation. It was important that children and young people were included in the process.
- There was a national charity with regional groups which were sharing information and delivering training.
- 16-17 year olds will not be able to be placed in unregistered accommodation.

- The new national policy may impact provision through some providers no longer providing for 16-17 year olds or some providers specialising in this age group.

Proposed by Cllr Alford, seconded by Cllr Knox

Decision

That the adoption of the approach to Ofsted regulation of supported accommodation for 16-17 year olds be recommended to Cabinet.

27. Birth to Settled Adulthood - Report of the Independent Chair

The Independent Chair of the Birth to Settled Adulthood Board introduced the report and gave a presentation which is attached to these minutes. The introduction included a summary of the previous report in March 2023 and the key areas of the report being considered at this meeting were highlighted.

Committee members discussed the report and asked questions of the officers and the Independent Chair. The following points were raised:

- Both Dorset Council and NHS Dorset needed a shared understanding of the how much funding was currently being spent and how much would be needed in the future.
- There was a need to ensure that resources were sufficient to provide the services.
- Collaborative working could be developed further through an understanding of the cost for poor transitions.
- Families may prefer to meet online, and they will be able to meet in-person or have physical resources too.
- Young people were not keen on attending the Birth to Settled Adulthood Board meetings. However, there was good representation from the Dorset Parent Carer Council.
- There were opportunities for officers to receive feedback from young people.

The 9 focused outcomes of the service redesign would be shared with the committee.

Members noted the progress and the update.

28. Exempt Business

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 - 11.03 am

Chairman

People and Health Overview Committee Work Programme

Meeting Date: 17 October 2023

Report Title	Aims and Objectives	Lead Officers / Members	Other Information
Making Care Experience a Protected Characteristic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To review the report and make any recommendations to Cabinet 	<p>Paul Dempsey – Corporate Director for Care and Protection</p> <p>Cllr Byron Quayle – Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills, and Early Help</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration by Cabinet on 7 November 2023
<p>Page 9</p> <p>Families First for Children Pathfinder</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To review and comment on the report. • To make recommendations to Cabinet – 7 November 2023 	<p>Paul Dempsey – Corporate Director for Care and Protection</p> <p>Cllr Byron Quayle – Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills, and Early Help</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration by Cabinet on 7 November 2023
Report on the Dorset Education Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To review and comment on the report. • To make recommendations to Cabinet – 7 November 2023 	<p>Amanda Davis – Corporate Director for Education & Learning</p> <p>Cllr Byron Quayle – Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills, and Early Help</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration by Cabinet on 7 November 2023

Expansion of funded childcare offer from April 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the expansion of funded childcare from April 2024 and support our longer-term vision of working with Early Years settings to ensure there is sufficient childcare available for children in Dorset for working families and those in education or training. To make any recommendations to Cabinet – 7 November 2023 	<p>Liz Curtis-Jones – Principal Lead for Best Start in Life</p> <p>Cllr Byron Quayle – Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills, and Early Help</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration by Cabinet on 7 November 2023
Adult Social Care Peer Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To share findings from the recent LGA peer review. 	<p>Amy-Jane White – Programme Lead</p> <p>Cllr Jane Somper – Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care, Health, and Housing</p>	

Meeting Date: 30 November 2023

Report Title	Aims and Objectives	Lead Officers / Members	Other Information
Housing Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review of the Housing Strategy following the public consultation and drafting of the final strategy. To make any recommendations to Cabinet 	<p>Andrew Billany – Corporate Director for Housing</p> <p>Cllr Jane Somper – Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care, Health, and Housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration by Cabinet on 5 December and Full Council on 14 December.
Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review the new voluntary and community sector strategy (VCSS) which aims to set out 	<p>Jennifer Lewis – Head of Strategic Communications and Engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration by Cabinet on 30 January

	<p>how Dorset Council will enable a thriving, sustainable and dynamic voluntary, and community sector to flourish and help improve the lives of individuals and communities in Dorset over coming years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To make any recommendations to Cabinet 	<p>Laura Cornette – Business Partner, Communities and Partnerships</p> <p>Cllr Laura Beddow – Portfolio Holder for Culture and Communities</p>	
Social Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further detail to be added to the work programme about the aims and objectives of this report 	<p>Claire Shiels – Corporate Director for Commissioning and Partnerships</p> <p>Cllr Byron Quayle – Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills, and Early Help</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Sufficient Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further detail to be added to the work programme about the aims and objectives of this report 	<p>Claire Shiels – Corporate Director for Commissioning and Partnerships</p> <p>Cllr Byron Quayle – Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills, and Early Help</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

Meeting Date: 6 February 2024

Report Title	Aims and Objectives	Lead Officers / Members	Other Information
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Pathfinder Implementation Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To outline the plan for the implementation of the Families First for Children Pathfinder. 	<p>James Boxer – Programme Manager, Children’s Social Care Review</p> <p>Cllr Byron Quayle – Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills, and Early Help</p>	
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Meeting Date: 19 March 2024

Report Title	Aims and Objectives	Lead Officers / Members	Other Information

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Unscheduled Committee Items

Report Title	Aims and Objectives	Lead Officers / Members	Other Information
Adults & Housing 10yr Transformation, Investment & Reform Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide an update on the Adults & Housing 10-year Transformation, Investment & Reform programme. 	<p>Jonathan Price – Corporate Director for Commissioning</p> <p>Andrew Billany – Corporate Director for Housing</p> <p>Cllr Jane Somper – Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care, Health, and Housing</p>	

Community Safety Plan 2023-26 and Pan-Dorset Reducing Reoffending Strategy 2023-26		Andy Frost – Service Manager for Community Safety Cllr Laura Beddow – Portfolio Holder for Culture and Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report to be considered by Cabinet and Full Council
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Informal Work of the Committee:

Date	Topic	Format	Members	Lead Officers / Members	Other Information
18 September 2023	Identifying Young Carers	Webinar	All Members	Simon Fraiz-Brown – Service Manager for Young & Thriving	Following a request for further information on identifying young carers at the People & Health Overview Committee on 27 June 2023.

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**The Cabinet Forward Plan - October 2023 to January 2024
For the period 1 SEPTEMBER 2023 to 31 DECEMBER 2023
(Publication date – 4 SEPTEMBER 2023)**

Explanatory Note:

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 -

- (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 2023/24

Spencer Flower	Leader / Governance, Performance and Communications
Gary Suttle	Deputy Leader and Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy
Ray Bryan	Highways, Travel and Environment
Jill Haynes	Corporate Development and Transformation
Laura Beddow	Culture and Communities
Simon Gibson	Economic Growth and Levelling Up
Andrew Parry	Assets and Property
Byron Quayle	People – Children, Education, Skills, and Early Help
Jane Somper	People - Adult Social Care, Health, and Housing
David Walsh	Planning

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
October					

<p>Ofsted Regulation of Supported Accommodation for 16-17 Year Olds</p> <p>Key Decision - No Public Access - Open</p> <p>Report on Ofsted Regulation of Supported Accommodation for 16 to 17 year olds.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 3 Oct 2023</p>	<p>People and Health Overview Committee 14 Sep 2023</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for People - Children, Education, Skills and Early Help</p>	<p><i>Claire Shiels, Corporate Director - Commissioning & Partnerships</i> <i>claire.shiels@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)</i></p>
<p>Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan Review 2011 - 2033</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>Item relating to the making (adoption) of the neighbourhood plan review following an independent examination.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 3 Oct 2023</p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Planning</p>	<p><i>Ed Gerry, Community Planning Manager</i> <i>ed.gerry@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, Place (John Sellgren)</i></p>
<p>Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: consultation on implementation of plan-making reforms - proposed response to the government consultation</p> <p>Key Decision - No Public Access - Open</p> <p>Response to government consultation on implementation of plan-making reforms.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 3 Oct 2023</p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Planning</p>	<p><i>Hilary Jordan, Service Manager for Spatial Planning</i> <i>hilary.jordan@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Terry Sneller, Strategic Planning Manager</i> <i>terry.sneller@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, Place (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>Discretionary Housing Payment Policy</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>Our Discretionary Housing Payment policy reflects the Department for Works and Pensions formal guidance providing the administration framework associated with the application, criteria, assessment and awarding principles established to provide when applicable, some additional financial support to eligible residents.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 3 Oct 2023</p>		<p>Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy</p>	<p><i>Katie Hale, Head of Revenues and Benefits katie.hale@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, Corporate Development - Section 151 Officer (Aidan Dunn)</i></p>
<p>Digital Infrastructure & Inclusion Strategy</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>To consider a report on Dorset Councils Digital Infrastructure and Inclusion Strategy.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 3 Oct 2023</p>	<p>Place and Resources Overview Committee 18 Apr 2023</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Corporate Development and Transformation</p>	<p><i>Dugald Lockhart, Service Manager Digital Place dugald.lockhart@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Timothy Robertson, ICT Project Manager timothy.robertson@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, Place (John Sellgren)</i></p>
<p>Weymouth Regeneration - Levelling Up Funding and Approach</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Part exempt</p> <p>To approve the proposed approach to the delivery of the Levelling Up Fund project and finances and to seek endorsement of the priorities for regeneration</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 3 Oct 2023</p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth and Levelling Up</p>	<p><i>Peter Hopkins, Corporate Director - Assets and Property peter.hopkins@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Julian Wain, Strategic Property Advisor Julian.wain@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, Place (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>The Proposed Sale of Clapcotts Farmstead, Spetisbury</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Fully exempt</p> <p>To seek approval to the sale of Clapcotts Farmstead, Spetisbury.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 3 Oct 2023</p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Assets and Property</p>	<p><i>Tim Hulme, Head of Service Property Management tim.hulme@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, Place (John Sellgren)</i></p>
<p>Grant funding from CIL for nitrogen mitigation, Poole Harbour Catchment</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Fully exempt</p> <p>Approval required as to whether mitigation for development already granted permission should continue to be delivered using CIL funds given amendments to the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 3 Oct 2023</p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Planning</p>	<p><i>Steve Boyt, Senior Planning Policy Officer steve.boyt@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Lyn Cooch, Senior Nutrient Project Officer lyn.cooch@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, Place (John Sellgren)</i></p>
<p>November</p>					
<p>Families First for Children Pathfinder</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>To consider a report regarding the Families First for Children Pathfinder.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 7 Nov 2023</p>	<p>People and Health Overview Committee 17 Oct 2023</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for People - Children, Education, Skills and Early Help</p>	<p><i>Paul Dempsey, Corporate Director - Care & Protection Tel: 01305 224513 paul.dempsey@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>Report on the Dorset Education Board</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 7 Nov 2023</p>	<p>People and Health Overview Committee 17 Oct 2023</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for People - Children, Education, Skills and Early Help</p>	<p><i>Amanda Davis, Corporate Director for Education and Learning amanda.davis@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)</i></p>
<p>Dog Related Public Spaces Protection Order- Renewal</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>To agree and adopt the draft order.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 7 Nov 2023</p>	<p>Place and Resources Overview Committee 5 Oct 2023</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Culture and Communities</p>	<p><i>Janet Moore, Service Manager for Environmental Protection Janet.Moore@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, Place (John Sellgren)</i></p>
<p>Quarter 2 Financial Monitoring 2023/24</p> <p>Key Decision - No Public Access - Open</p> <p>To consider the Quarter 2 Financial Monitoring Report 2023/24.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 7 Nov 2023</p>		<p>Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy</p>	<p><i>Sean Cremer, Corporate Director for Finance and Commercial sean.cremer@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, Corporate Development - Section 151 Officer (Aidan Dunn)</i></p>
<p>Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and Budget Strategy</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>To receive a budget update for 2024/25.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 7 Nov 2023</p>		<p>Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy</p>	<p><i>Sean Cremer, Corporate Director for Finance and Commercial sean.cremer@dorsetcouncil.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>Our Future Council - Business Case</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>Proposals for change set out in an invest to save business case.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 7 Nov 2023</p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Culture and Communities</p>	<p><i>Lisa Cotton, Corporate Director for Customer and Cultural Services</i> <i>lisa.cotton@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Nina Coakley, Head of Change</i> <i>n.coakley@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, Corporate Development - Section 151 Officer (Aidan Dunn), Matt Prosser</i></p>
<p>Making Care Experience a Protected Characteristic - local Adoption</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>To adopt care experience as a protected characteristic.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 7 Nov 2023</p>	<p>Place and Resources Overview Committee 17 Oct 2023</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for People - Children, Education, Skills and Early Help</p>	<p><i>Paul Dempsey, Corporate Director - Care & Protection</i> <i>Tel: 01305 224513</i> <i>paul.dempsey@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)</i></p>
<p>Chesil Bank Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2023</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>An item relating to the making (adoption) of the neighbourhood plan following independent examination and a public referendum.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 7 Nov 2023</p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Planning</p>	<p><i>Ed Gerry, Community Planning Manager</i> <i>ed.gerry@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, Place (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>Expansion of funded childcare offer from April 2024</p> <p>Key Decision - No Public Access - Open</p> <p>The intention of this Cabinet paper is to consider the expansion of funded childcare from April 2024 and support our longer term vision of working with Early Years settings to ensure there is sufficient childcare available for children in Dorset for working families and those in education or training.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 5 Sep 2023</p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for People - Children, Education, Skills and Early Help</p>	<p><i>Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)</i></p>
<p>Landford Waste Management Centre - Update on finance and land acquisition</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Part exempt</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 3 Oct 2023</p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Culture and Communities</p>	<p><i>Gemma Clinton, Head of Commercial Waste and Strategy gemma.clinton@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Jason Jones, Group Manager (Commissioning) jason.jones@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, Place (John Sellgren)</i></p>
<p>December</p>					

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
<p>Housing Strategy</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>To consider and agree the Housing Strategy.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 5 Dec 2023</p>	<p>People and Health Overview Committee 30 Nov 2023</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for People - Adult Social Care, Health and Housing</p>	<p><i>Sharon Attwater, Service Manager for Housing Strategy and Performance</i> <i>sharon.attwater@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Andrew Billany, Corporate Director for Housing</i> <i>andrew.billany@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Sarah Smith, Housing Strategy Lead</i> <i>sarah.smith@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, People - Adults</i></p>
<p>Page 22 January 2024</p>					
<p>Quarter 3 Financial Monitoring Report 2023/24</p> <p>Key Decision - No Public Access - Open</p> <p>To consider the Quarter 3 Financial Monitoring Report 2023/24.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 30 Jan 2024</p>		<p>Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy</p>	<p><i>Sean Cremer, Corporate Director for Finance and Commercial</i> <i>sean.cremer@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, Corporate Development - Section 151 Officer (Aidan Dunn)</i></p>
<p>Budget strategy and medium-term financial plan (MTFP)</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access – Open</p> <p>To consider a report of the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Assets.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Dorset Council</p>	<p>Decision Date 13 Feb 2024</p>	<p>Cabinet 30 Jan 2024 Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee 17 Jan 2024 People and Health Scrutiny Committee 12 Jan 2024</p>	<p>Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy</p>	<p><i>Sean Cremer, Corporate Director for Finance and Commercial</i> <i>sean.cremer@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>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
March					
April					
<p>Quarter 4 Financial Monitoring 2023/24</p> <p>Key Decision - No Public Access - Open</p> <p>to consider the Quarter 4 Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 16 Apr 2024</p>		<p>Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy</p>	<p><i>Sean Cremer, Corporate Director for Finance and Commercial</i> <i>sean.cremer@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>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.



The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE) Forward Plan For the period 1 SEPTEMBER 2023 to 31 DECEMBER 2023 (Publication date – 21 AUGUST 2023)

Explanatory Note:

This Forward Plan contains future items to be considered by the Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence. 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 which are likely to -

- (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.

Committee Membership 2023/24

Spencer Flower	Leader / Governance, Performance and Communications
Gary Suttle	Deputy Leader / Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy
Laura Beddow	Culture and Communities
Byron Quayle	Children, Education, Skills and Early Help
Jane Somper	Adult Social Care and Health

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
Standing items for consideration				
September				
Dorset Council delegated decisions Key Decision - No Public Access - Open	Decision Maker The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE)	Decision Date 18 Sep 2023	Portfolio Holder for People - Children, Education, Skills and Early Help	<i>Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)</i>
Dorset Council Commissioning Report Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Fully exempt	Decision Maker The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE)	Decision Date 18 Sep 2023	Portfolio Holder for People - Children, Education, Skills and Early Help	<i>Claire Shiels, Corporate Director - Commissioning, Quality & Partnerships claire.shiels@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, People - Adults</i>
DCOE - Report of Independent Chair of Board of Directors Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Fully exempt	Decision Maker The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE)	Decision Date 18 Sep 2023	Portfolio Holder for People - Children, Education, Skills and Early Help	<i>Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)</i>
November				

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
Dorset Council Delegated Decisions Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open	Decision Maker The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE)	Decision Date 20 Nov 2023	Portfolio Holder for People - Children, Education, Skills and Early Help	<i>Claire Shiels, Corporate Director - Commissioning, Quality & Partnerships</i> <i>claire.shiels@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)</i>
Dorset Council Commissioning Report Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Part exempt	Decision Maker The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE)	Decision Date 20 Nov 2023	Portfolio Holder for People - Children, Education, Skills and Early Help	<i>Claire Shiels, Corporate Director - Commissioning, Quality & Partnerships</i> <i>claire.shiels@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)</i>
DCoE - Report of Chair of the Board of Directors Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Part exempt	Decision Maker The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE)	Decision Date 20 Nov 2023	Portfolio Holder for People - Children, Education, Skills and Early Help	<i>Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)</i>
Annual Reports				

Report to Full Council on performance of the trading activities of the company Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open	Decision Maker The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE)	Decision Date	Portfolio Holder for People - Children, Education, Skills and Early Help	<i>Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)</i>
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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.

People & Health Overview Committee

17 October 2023

Adults & Housing Directorate Peer Review and Action Plan.

For Review and Consultation

Portfolio Holder: Cllr J Somper, Adult Social Care, Health and Housing

Local Councillor(s): All

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

Report Author: Amy-Jane White
Job Title: Programme Lead- Quality Assurance
Tel: 01305 225394
Email: amy-jane.white@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

In May 2023, the Adults & Housing Directorate invited the Local Government Association (LGA) to complete a peer review. This peer review, and a parallel safeguarding review, was designed to support Dorset Council and its partners assess its current achievements, areas for development and capacity to change, as part of its preparation for the future Care Quality Commission (CQC) Annual Assurance regime.

The report with findings has now been received and a subsequent action plan has been developed to drive forward the LGA's recommendations. The report and action plan are being shared with the People and Health Overview Committee at its meeting on 17 October for consideration.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the People & Health Overview Committee:

- i) acknowledge the LGA Peer Review report and findings.
- ii) endorse the action plan which has been prepared in response to the recommendations set out in the peer review report.

Reason for Recommendation:

The LGA peer review was an important undertaking for the directorate to assess and scrutinise itself ahead of any formal CQC inspection. The directorate wish to share this report and action plan with the People and Health Overview Committee to support the directorate in delivering the LGA peer review report recommendations.

1. Executive Summary

In May 2023, The Adults & Housing directorate invited the Local Government Association (LGA) to complete a Peer Review.

- 1.1 This process consisted of a peer review team being on site for 3 days to undertake interviews with focus groups of council colleagues, our key stakeholders, and partners. Prior to the site visit, the peer review team also completed a review of practice through a casefile audit and interviews with a cohort of individuals with lived experience and their carers. The team were also provided with a self-assessment document that provided more information on the directorate's strategies, initiatives and approach to delivering its services.
- 1.2 The peer review team reviewed and collated the information it received and produced a report with its findings. The report, as set out in appendix 1, highlights some of the directorate's strengths and recommends areas to improve.
- 1.3 Since receiving this report and recommendations, the directorate has been progressing activity to drive improvement. This has been set out in appendix 2 - action plan, which shows how the Directorate is responding to the findings and its recommendations.
- 1.4 Overall, the directorate were extremely pleased with the feedback it has received from the LGA peer review team. As set out in the report (appendix 1), the peer review team highlighted many positives, some of which were described as national best practice.
- 1.5 A parallel peer review took place into our safeguarding practice. This was conducted by Seona Douglas, who is an Independent Consultant and a former Director of Adult Social Services (DASS). The additional and specific focus on Safeguarding was to provide clarity and assurance around our internal decision-making processes, including threshold for

safeguarding enquires and the service quality in meeting the 'Making Safeguarding Personal' principles.

- 1.6 Feedback from the safeguarding review was very positive and highlighted the passionate and caring practice and the strong approach to risk management. The review also highlighted some helpful recommendations that is supporting the directorates overall improvement journey.

2. **LGA Peer Review – background, report and action plan**

- 2.1 The Health and Care Act 2022 provided CQC with new powers to complete an independent assessment of care at a local authority and integrated care system level from April 2023. This programme of assurance has been introduced following a period of 13 years without inspections of adult services and a reliance on sector led improvements for scrutiny of services. The LGA have supported adult service departments, as part of an inspection readiness programme, by completing a programme of peer review challenges throughout 2023 and 2024.
- 2.2 Peer challenge is a proven tool for improvement that the Local Government Association (LGA) provides. It involves a team of local government officers and councillors spending time at the council as peers to provide challenge and share learning. The process involves engaging with a wide range of people connected with the Council and those who access our services.
- 2.3 The Peer Team followed the assessment framework developed by CQC for Local Authorities as part of their assurance programme and provided feedback on the four themes:
- 2.4 The Review Team was made up of experienced officers and councillors from authorities across the Country. The peers involved in the challenge were:
 - i. Martin Farran, Ex- Director of Adult Social Care
 - ii. Councillor David Fothergill, Leader of the opposition Somerset Council & Chair of LGA Community Wellbeing Board
 - iii. Julie Phillips, Assistant Director, Adult Social Care, West Sussex County Council

- iv. Faye Pemberton-Crow, Assistant Director, Worcestershire County Council
 - v. Bev Johnston, Principal Social Worker, Bury Council
 - vi. Abbie Murr, Challenge Manager, Local Government Association
- 2.5 Appendix 1 contains the full Peer Review Report from May 2023 setting out the Directorates strengths and recommendations from the Peer Team.
- 2.6 The peer review found a great deal for the directorate to be proud and our assessors were particularly struck by the overall ambition passion and commitment they found when talking to partners and colleagues. Among the notable observations were that the directorate has:
- i. A clear political direction and strong senior leadership team.
 - ii. An ambitious and committed workforce that understands the clear vision, values and key priorities of the directorate.
 - iii. Strong budget management and ownership, with positive use of data to support.
 - iv. Innovation in many areas and market leading initiatives highlighted as national best practice.
 - v. Good safeguarding practice and outcomes (highlighted by recent safeguarding review).
 - vi. A clear commitment to the development of Housing.
 - vii. A very good Technology Enabled Care (TEC) offer which should be showcased as national best practice.
 - viii. Numerous good news stories of supported living for people with learning disabilities, which should be showcased.
- 2.7 Appendix 2 contains the action plan showing how the Directorate is responding to the recommendations that were set out within the report.
- 2.8 Progress in delivering the actions will be monitored and reported with our Directorate Quality Assurance (QA) Board. Our quarterly QA Board, chaired by our DASS, will review the action plan alongside our other inspection readiness work as standing items on the agenda.

3 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications from this report.

4 Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications

There are no direct environmental implications from this report.

5 Well-being and Health Implications

None

6 Other Implications

None

7 Risk Assessment

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

There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

9 Appendices

Appendix 1 - LGA Peer Review Report.

Appendix 2 - Overview of Recommendations and Action Plan.

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Dorset Council Adult Social Care Preparation for Assurance **Peer Challenge Report**

23rd - 25th May 2023

Final

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REPORT

Background

1.0 Dorset Council requested the Local Government Association (LGA) to conduct an Adult Social Care Preparation for Assurance Peer Challenge within the Council and with its partners. The work was commissioned by Vivienne Broadhurst, Executive Director People, Adults (DASS), who sought an external perspective on the readiness of the adult's directorate for the Care Quality Commission's Assurance inspections.

1.1 A peer challenge is designed to support an authority and its partners assess current achievements, areas for development and capacity to change. The peer challenge is not an inspection. Instead, it offers a supportive approach, undertaken by friends – albeit 'critical friends' with no surprises. All information was collected on a non-attributable basis in order to promote an open and honest dialogue and feedback from the team of peers is given in good faith.

1.2 Prior to the on-site peer challenge, three members of the peer team conducted eight interviews with individuals with lived experience and twelve casefile audits. The peer challenge team arrived at their final feedback by triangulating what they read, heard, and observed on-site, while keeping in mind the diverse audiences that the adults directorate deal with.

1.3 The members of the peer challenge team were:

- **Martin Farran**, Ex- Director of Adult Social Care
- **Councillor David Fothergill**, Leader of the opposition Somerset Council & Chair of LGA Community Wellbeing Board
- **Julie Phillips**, Assistant Director, Adult Social Care, West Sussex County Council
- **Faye Pemberton-Crow**, Assistant Director, Worcestershire County Council
- **Bev Johnston**, Principal Social Worker, Bury Council
- **Abbie Murr**, Challenge Manager, Local Government Association

1.4 The team were onsite in Dorset between 23rd and 25th of May 2023. The programme included activities designed to enable members of the peer team to meet and talk to a range of internal and external stakeholders. These activities included:

- interviews and discussions with councillors, officers and partners
- meetings with managers, practitioners, frontline staff and those people with a lived experience and carers
- reading documents provided by the Council, including a self-assessment and a range of other material, consideration of different data and completion of a case file audit.

1.5 The framework used by the peer team was the CQC's four themes of Assurance which will be used for the adult social care inspection regime. These are:

1: Working with People	2: Providing Support	3: Ensuring safety	4: Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessing needs • direct payments • charging arrangements • supporting people to live healthier lives • prevention • wellbeing • information and advice • addressing barriers and reducing inequalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • care provision, integration and continuity • market shaping • commissioning • workforce capacity and capability • integration and partnership working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • safeguarding enquiries and reviews • Safeguarding Adult Board • safe systems - continuity of care • safe systems - pathways and transitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • culture • strategic planning • learning • improvement • innovation • governance • management • Sustainability 

1.6 The peer challenge team would like to thank councillors, all staff, those people with a lived experience, carers, partners, and providers for their open and constructive responses throughout the peer challenge process. All information gathered was on an anonymous basis. The team was made to feel extremely welcome and special thanks is given to Amy-Jane White, Programme Lead for Market Relationships, Major Contracts, over 65's, her team, and Steve Peddie, Programme Director for Adult Services Reform, for their invaluable assistance prior to and during this peer challenge, which was meticulously planned and delivered.

1.7 Prior to being on-site peer team members spoke to three people with a lived experience, five carers and an advocate and considered twelve case files. The peer team read at least 189 documents including a self-assessment. Throughout the peer challenge the team had more than thirty-five meetings with over a hundred different people from adult social care, health, the third sector, other partners, people with a lived experience and carers. The peer challenge team have spent over a hundred and ninety-six hours with the adult's directorate at Dorset and its documentation, the equivalent of twenty-eight working days.

1.8 On the final day of the peer challenge, the peer team presented a summary of key findings to leaders including the Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer and portfolio holder for adult social care. This report expands on the initial findings and provides a comprehensive account of the peer challenge.

Strengths

- A clear political direction driven by the Leader and his team
- Strong senior leadership team in place
- Ambitious, committed and passionate adult social care workforce observed during the peer challenge timeframe
- Dorset is a great place with inward migration, largely of older people
- Adult social care vision, values and key priorities clearly articulated and owned across the workforce
- Dorset know themselves well and can articulate it across the diversity of their workforce
- Strong budget management and ownership
- Strong commitment by staff to transformation/ Improvement e.g., home first, accelerator programme.
- Evidence of market innovation and home care optimisation
- Development of strategic commissioning and independent sector heard and supported, established care association in place
- Robust Trusted Assessor model in place
- TEC offer is robust, innovative
- Established and developing role of trading company (complementary role supporting the wider sector)
- Positive use of data supporting budget/performance and vision for the future
- Clear commitment to development of Housing
- Lots of innovation and delivery of best practice to celebrate
- Overall good performance to comparators
- People feel safe (reporting data)

Considerations

- Lots of learning has been undertaken but embedding and cementing this learning to affect change now needs to take priority
- Need to ensure a single version of the truth regarding data
- Large transformation plan, over last four years, query impact on staff/capacity to deliver, scale of transformation versus business as usual
- Need to prioritise the priorities, not everything can be a priority
- Lot of policies, strategies and guidance but in draft form, these need to be embedded with evidence of the impact
- Need to consider asset-based approach and embed community development, including definition or understanding of localities, co-terminosity and need for more focus on wellbeing
- Need to embrace workforce planning/ productively to inform assessment and care management capacity and performance. Consider implementation of case volume and caseload key performance indicators as evidence seen of needs assessments taking over fifty days and considerable waiting times for reviews
- Consultation and engagement versus co production needs revisiting. Consider the 'coproduction ladder'
- Demographic challenge/opportunities. What will Dorset look and feel like in 10 years' time, opportunity to be national leaders given demographic profile.

1.11 The Local Government Reorganisation of 2019 Dorset created two new unitary councils, from the legacy county, six districts and two unitaries, one of which was Dorset Council. The political administration is well-established, with the Leader and his Cabinet team articulating and steering a clear political course of direction. The current Portfolio Holder for People, Adult Social Care, Health, and Housing had been in office for twenty-three days at the time of the peer challenge due to a cabinet reshuffle that occurred on May 1, 2023. However, this councillor has been a member of the Dorset Council's political administration since May 2019 and demonstrated an in-depth comprehension of adult social care and a clear vision for the future.

1.12 The Chief Executive has ambitious and realisable plans to further transform housing and social services for adults. The Executive Director evidenced a clear vision for adult social care and housing with sound strategic and operational oversight. The adult social care senior leadership team have been on a difficult journey over the last four years in the transition to a unitary authority and working through Covid. Despite these challenges they maintained adult social care delivery and have clearly embraced the newly implemented Integrated Care System (ICS).

1.13 The adult social care and housing strategy and vision demonstrates clearly how it will accomplish the strategic objectives outlined in the corporate plan. The adult social care transformation plan, which has been in effect since 2019 and includes a multiplicity of priorities, is comprehensive. As the transformation plan continues to expand, it may be necessary to consider the risk of transformation fatigue. Given that not everything can be a priority, it is suggested that a review of the plan's priorities be conducted. Consideration of which priorities could be accomplished as part of business as usual could reduce "transformation fatigue" among employees and make transformation goals more attainable.

1.14 Dorset's adult social care vision, values and key priorities were clearly articulated and owned by staff. Staff were able to convey how their roles and service area plans and priorities linked with the overall adult social care and housing transformation plans. This provided evidence to the peer team that Dorset know themselves extremely well and are also very clear on their direction of travel.

1.15 Given the journey adult social care has been on over the last four years a number of strategies, policies, procedures, frameworks and practice guidance are either in draft or in the process of being developed. Consideration needs to be given as to how these are going to be embedded across the directorate and with partners, providers, those who use services, carers and residents to ensure a consistent approach to practice and pathways.

1.16 The peer team were impressed with the commitment and passion of the adult social care workforce as well as the nurturing and supportive culture of the directorate. The following statements are but a handful of comments the peer team heard over the two days:

- *"I love working for Dorset Council"*
- *"The Council is really willing to look at itself in the mirror"*

- *“When things go wrong they are there for you, and that’s the kind of organisation I want to work for”*
- *“The wellbeing offer is fundamental to the core of Dorset council”*

Theme 1 Working with People

This theme covers: Assessing needs, care planning and review, direct payments, charging arrangements, supporting people to live healthier lives, prevention, wellbeing, information and advice, addressing barriers to access and reducing inequalities in experience and outcomes.

Assessing Needs

Strengths

- Robust system in place to manage waiting lists for Care Act needs assessments, staff could articulate approach (inclusive of Trusted Reviewers Pilot)
- Evidence of service user outcomes goals in support plans
- Adult social care front door plan is well articulated with a clear vision
- Robust MCA Team which is nationally recognised as best practice team and good management oversight of DoLS reviews and thriving BIA workforce
- Use of Mosaic to record housing needs (to enable future planning for vulnerable adults)
- OT Team link in early with hospitals to look at specialist equipment required for discharge and work closely with hospital therapists resulting in reduced hospital discharge delays
- Hospital to home service, up to 6 week reablement offer
- Advocacy offer well embedded

2.1 As a result of training and reflective practice sessions, strengths-based practice has been well embedded across adult social care. Examples of strengths-based practice were shared with the peer team during interview sessions with people that use services, their carers and by the adult social care workforce. In eighty eight percent of cases audited by the peer team evidence of strength-based practice was identified. In addition, eighty three percent of cases revealed that the person had identified their own unique outcome goals and had been directly involved in all decisions regarding their care and support.

2.2 During interviews with adults with lived experience, the peer team heard several positive comments about the AMHP Service and specific AMHPs who had gone "above and beyond." Carers reported that AMHPs ensured their complete participation in the assessment process and thoroughly explained their rights as nearest relatives. The peer team could see how much had been accomplished in a brief period of time regarding the implementation of the new AMHP model and how

this model ensures timely interventions and assessments in accordance with the Mental Health Act of 1983 (as amended in 2007).

2.3 The casefile audit evidenced that in ninety two percent of cases appropriate support had been offered to the person using services throughout their journey and that in seventy nine percent of cases people had been given information and a range of options to enable them to make informed choices.

2.4 All casefiles audited by the peer team had case note recordings that were clear and legible. This is an amazing achievement and should be celebrated.

Considerations

- Carers told us they had difficulty finding information, advice and guidance on Council public facing website, causing confusion (carers session)
- Carers assessments not always being identified and reviewed annually (lived experience session and telephone calls)
- CHC reviews being undertaken by private company, 3mth reviews re outcomes causing anxiety (lived experience session)
- Having to repeat story due to duty model (carers session), however adult social care passport work should address this
- Different approaches to the backlog of reviews being implemented across adult social care
- Some service-users felt they were not involved in decision making (small group)
- Consider mental health OT resource re neurodiversity reviews and ASD pathways
- A reminder to staff that they need to share needs assessments and support plans with service user/carer (feedback from lived experience interviews)
- Reviews do not appear to be undertaken in timely manner; one service user waited 3yrs which was undertaken in the library where she worked.

2.5 Regarding reporting progress against a person's outcome goals this was identified in forty seven percent of cases. Those who had achieved positive outcomes because of care and support interventions had only been recorded in forty two percent of cases. Although the casefile audit was a small sample and seen as a 'snapshot in time,' the results of the audit suggest consideration is given to ensure staff always record achieved outcome goals as a result of care and support interventions.

2.6 Several carers and adults receiving care and support services reported lengthy wait periods for a review of their care and support plans during the onsite sessions and the lived experience interviews. Interestingly the casefile audit found that in eighty percent of cases audited no review date could be found. Similar to the majority of adult social care departments across the country, Dorset has waiting lists for the completion of Care Act needs assessments and reviews. Although staff were able to articulate that a robust system is in place to manage waiting lists for needs assessments, further workforce planning and a review of current workforce capacity against demand should be considered. Future workforce planning could be aided by the implementation of

service demand and caseload number key performance indicators. In addition, increased visibility of risk mitigation action plans should be considered, particularly if they are awaiting an assessment need, have an open safeguarding enquiry, and mental capacity issues (identified as lessons learned from a number of safeguarding adult reviews conducted by a variety of local authorities across the country).

2.7 The peer team heard of several different approaches being utilised regarding the backlog of reviews. It is recommended for consideration, that a standardised management process is implemented to ensure continuity across the adult social care system.

2.8 During the onsite carers sessions and lived experience interviews carers reported that their needs as carers were not always identified and that where they had received a carers assessment there were often delays in reviews. In contrast the casefile audit identified that in seventy five percent of cases carers' needs had been appropriately considered.

Supporting People to Live Healthier Lives

Strengths

- Carers vision strategy and Carers Charter, coproduced with carers with set objectives
- Carer presence on Joint Commissioning Board and SAB
- Implementation of Carers Team will further promote voice of carers
- Working with people who use services/carers in the whole commissioning cycle to gain feedback and learning to improve process/pathways
- Fifteen bedded autism provider unit recently launched to promote semi-independent living
- Numerous good news stories of supported living for people with learning disabilities, this work should be show cased
- Leonardo Trust Counselling Service for parents/carers valued (children's offer)
- Digital offer considered at diagnosis of dementia to achieve best possible outcomes
- Digital champions in place, including libraries, service user access to laptops/tablets/phones/cyber security
- Digital first approach, upskilling all ASC workforce in digital offer

2.9 The peer team found there to be robust carers offer in place across Dorset. During the onsite carers session several carers shared how the carers support they had received had been a "lifeline" during especially challenging periods with their loved ones. Carers candidly discussed the "hidden trauma" often associated with being a carer and how they had received six free counselling sessions as they were known to either Rethink or Carer Support Dorset which they stated was "invaluable" (advertised on the council's website). The peer team also met with the newly appointed Area Practice Manager from the recently created Carers Team. The enthusiasm and obvious dedication of the Area Practice Manager was evident as they shared Dorset's

vision of ensuring that every carer paid or otherwise will have a voice regarding how carers services are commissioned, monitored and reviewed. The Carers Strategy and Vision which was coproduced with carers and has coproduced objectives that are linked to the corporate plan (Our Dorset).

2.10 The peer team met several adults who frequent Munsie's Day Centre, as well as the centre's founder and her mother. Adults who frequent Munsie's provided excellent feedback, indicating that it is a highly valued and sought-after resource which promotes both wellbeing and independence. People described how they had acquired diverse skills, including financial management, budgeting, job interviewing, and cookery.

2.11 The peer team was impressed by the Occupational Therapy Digital and Tech Team and Tech Lounge offer, in which the Cabinet Member for the adult social care, health, and housing portfolio is fully engaged. Staff shared with us the amazing and innovative work they have been doing, such as the companion pet pilot programme, which is examining whether this can reduce falls and anxiety/wandering in individuals with dementia and/or a learning disability. This innovative work was deemed to be on par with best practices by the peer team, and Dorset should certainly publicise it.

Considerations

- Changes in charges not communicated in a timely way or in easy read version causing confusion and anxiety to some service users and carers
- Housing disconnect, lack of appropriate housing provision to meet needs
- No named worker in learning disability services resulting in lack of continuity and difficulty building effective and trusting relationships

2.12 During the lived experience interviews and onsite sessions with individuals with lived experience and carers, the peer team heard their perspectives on direct payments. Carers and people with lived experience opined that the current direct payment system is "too rigid" and "lacks flexibility," and that the system should allow for greater creativity. They also expressed difficulty in understanding the language used in information concerning direct payments and felt that this creates barriers and confusion. that the principle behind direct payments is that people have choice and control over the care and support to which they are entitled, Dorset

Council may wish to consider the innovative research conducted by Essex County Council which identifies some of the key barriers and enablers that contribute to the effective delivery of direct payments. Dorset may also want to consider current personal assistants pay rates and whether this may be leading to gaps in provision.

2.13 Currently Dorset does not have a standalone prevention strategy, the peer team found it interesting that public health did not appear to be in the adult social care prevention space. Prevention and Early Intervention is integral to supporting healthier lives for individuals and providing better outcomes. Closer links with public health and PCNs would embed prevention further and create better opportunities for individual outcomes and joint working. The peer team also felt that staff had difficulty in articulating what services/approaches were in place to promote prevention and early

intervention. Dorset may wish to consider developing such a strategy that demonstrates the Council's overarching corporate and partnership approach to prevention and highlights key prevention activities and anticipated outcomes. The strategy could outline the Council's intention to adopt a culture of prevention and early intervention in order to reduce the need for intensive intervention services which additionally enables residents to live an independent life as long as possible. Additionally, the development of the implementation of ICP strategies of early help, prevention and thriving communities (which is underway) should bring a greater focus on the health and wellbeing of residents and give greater opportunity to explore early intervention and prevention through the life course.

Equity in experiences and outcomes

Strengths

- Black and Ethnic Minority Workforce Group
- Celebrated Black History Month and Race Equality Week
- Women's Network and menopause training
- Mental Health Champions
- Disabled Workers Network

2.14 The council have employed an EDI lead who is in the process of forging closer links between council directorates and public health and setting up a number of EDI advisory groups to further promote the EDI agenda.

2.15 The peer team heard of several innovative initiatives that have been developed to ensure equal access to adult social care for those adults from hard-to-reach groups. These consisted of a dedicated mental health housing officer which also supports timely discharge from hospital, the rough sleeper's strategy which has strong links with the Community Safety Partnership and Housing and the Dragon Fly project which is promoting a whole system approach to hard-to-reach groups regarding domestic abuse.

Considerations

- Limited housing stock for mental health supported living and adults with complex care and support needs
- Mental Health OT resource required with neurodiversity skills
- Consider review of ASD pathways along with partnership working
- Consider impact of immigration barge docked in Portland especially given right wing community groups
- Consider collation of Workforce Racial Equality Standards (WRES) data
- Information and advice on public facing website described as "confusing and not accessible" by several people with lived experience. However, published data shows that feedback is relatively good in this area (67.3% satisfaction against 65.6% average for comparator group. NHS data)

2.16 Although the council has in place an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (2021-2024) some of the terminology in the strategy is outdated and no longer used, such as BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic). In 2019 following guidance from the Race Disparity Unit the government stopped using the terminology BAME and instead recommends that, wherever possible, we should use the specific ethnic classifications of the census and where it is absolutely necessary to group together people from different ethnic minority backgrounds, we should say 'ethnic minorities' or 'people from ethnic minority backgrounds'.

Theme 2 Providing Support

This theme covers: market shaping, commissioning, workforce capacity and capability, integration and partnership working.

Care provision, integration and continuity

Strengths

- Intermediate care project currently reviewing people who fall in care homes – piloting tech 24hr falls project
- demonstrated effective working and benefits for individuals who use services
- Proposed hub and spoke model for day services will utilise community assets and demonstrate person centred care
- Development and investment into Extra Care
- Development of Care Dorset as an established trading company has provided support to the wider sector in a complimentary role

3.0 Integration with health colleagues across teams for individuals with learning disabilities and mental health demonstrated effective collaboration and improved service users' outcomes. During the lived experience and carer sessions, participants articulated the advantages of this collaborative working approach. Several participants described how they can see the right professional at the right time, which frequently prevents a crisis. The peer team heard some incredible personal accounts of adults achieving their individual goals as a direct result of collaborative multi-disciplinary working.

3.1 The adult social care directorate has a strong relationship with care providers. Feedback from both council commissioning staff and providers demonstrated a collaborative way of working with care providers. The Fair cost of care exercise, that was successfully completed has also had positive results for providers and further promoted collaborative working.

3.2 The peer team was impressed by the Peripatetic Team, an innovative solution for managing vacancies and staff absences across the adult social care system. The team's staff were enthusiastic and committed to this model, and they provided excellent examples of how their professional knowledge, competencies, and skills had

expanded as a result of working in the team. The peer team also spoke with an ASYE working within the team, who shared that the learning they had received was invaluable and provided a comprehensive overview of the various roles within adult social care something that would never have been achieved normally.

Considerations

- Asset based community development bottom up approach needs to be further strengthened as both a means of promoting wellbeing and reducing demand, but also drawing upon assets – the community.
- Formal agreements should be made with wider partners regarding service provision for out of area placements as this may create inequity
- Information to wider partners, care providers and VCSE is not joined up-there is not a sense of continuity or integration regarding DC's priorities and current workplans
- Considerable challenges regarding demographic demand outstripping supply
- Considerable shortage of social housing for 18+ the council should consider council led activity in the local private rental market making more homes available at lower cost and aim to improve housing services for residents, and tenants of all social landlords including an active and increasing role for residents and tenants.
- Pathway for homelessness in hospital to be considered to support patient flow
- There is a commitment to work together from System Leaders however, clearer definition of localities/communities would be beneficial to bring together closer working in line with the ICS mandate
- Positive redesign and development of commissioning function which is recognised by providers, partners and staff

3.3 Staff interviewed acknowledged that additional work is required in the areas of workforce planning and addressing vacancies across care providers at both a strategic and operational level to reduce risks across the care market and to ensure continuity of care and the best possible outcomes for those in need of care and support services.

3.4 The peer team identified that there are numerous meetings that appear to take place at an informal level but little evidence of how these meetings link to either business as usual activities or transformation actions. Dorset may need to consider implementation of action logs at each informal meeting to ensure that information is not lost and can be shared across the system where appropriate to inform business as usual or transformation plan actions.

3.5 The council acknowledges that further work is required to promote the housing offer, especially regarding supported housing for young adults and adults with a mental disorder. The council's housing stock is currently being reviewed to ensure future housing proofing. In addition, the council undertook a restructure of housing last year, resulting in a single point of access with a dedicated email address for professionals.

Partnerships and communities

Strengths

- Mental Health System resilience group jointly owned, currently reviewing increase in section 136 as partnership group to reduce numbers
- Mental Health colleagues have been made aware of CHC Joint Funding Policy (currently under review)
- Data reporting to ICB around hospital admissions for individuals detained under The Act is positive and supports risk management and future market provision
- Community Safety Partnership working closely with housing “parish connection” regarding reducing gold standard of identification for domestic abuse
- Robust community partnership prevention offer (Urgent community response model, Aging well and home first, community connectors, social prescribers)
- Health colleagues recently undertook Research in Practice Care Act training
- Recently reviewed dispute policy
- Social Prescribers within PCNs working really well in North Dorset
- Good representation of council and health partners at health integrated collaborative events
- Project underway to consider sharing of information between services regarding those with high dependency care and support needs (revolving door) via Health DIIS
- Joint record sharing is positive and reduces duplication and improves user experience
- VCSE, Care Providers, Town and Parish Councils feel well supported by commissioners and the council
- VCSE feel well represented at the ICPA and ‘feel valued and have a voice’
- Significant volume of volunteers across Dorset support hospital flow, out of hours and low-level needs, reducing demand on ASC
- Joint working with CYP services supports a seamless transition into adult services
- TEC offer has brought partners together to maximise independence and opportunities for individuals
- ASC multi-disciplinary front door redesign project is well thought through with a focus on managing demand and early intervention
- Partnership digital front door, primary and secondary mapping currently in early stages but extremely promising outcomes envisaged
- Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy in place
- Recent project with DHSC (12wk project) recommended 2 x concepts
- Home Care Optimisation programme has provided improved service user experience and provider stability
- Investment in Partners in Care has demonstrated positive outcomes

3.6 Staff from mental health services described being actively involved in the discharge planning for mental health patients as a result of the Section 117 Project. Staff had direct oversight of mental health discharge delays and parity of esteem with D2A as well as weekly commissioning operations meetings to unblock delays (commissioning, housing, etc.) and a dedicated mental health housing officer reducing discharge delays, it was evident to the peer team that the current process was aligned to NICE Guidelines (Transition from inpatient mental health settings to community or care home settings, 2016).

3.7 In addition, the peer team were impressed with the other outcomes that had been achieved as a result of the Section 117 Project, such as a robust discharge process/pathway, a section 117 hub with the council being the commissioner with responsibility for sign off for section 117 aftercare under the scheme of delegation, a new section 117 assessment process and paper work, and the implementation of an advanced practitioner to support training in section 117 and promoting the early discharge planning approach.

3.8 The team identified exemplary instances of collaborative innovation throughout the D2A system, including the route 256 pathway and the streamlined discharge procedure. This has resulted in successful outcomes and improved patient flow. There is now a partnership commitment to long-term planning, and a core D2A offering has been established. Additionally, the Home First model has reduced delayed discharges, increased capacity, improved hospital avoidance, and demonstrated effective partnership working.

Considerations

- Extra care housing - partners not yet involved as still early in journey
- Consider undertaking work around place and localities including asset mapping, community development
- Further utilisation of the VCSE would be beneficial to support with demand
- Consistency of approach to support individuals with complex needs with health partners would ensure equity and improve service user experience
- Greater analysis of data to inform targeted intervention for individuals discharged following PW1
- Do staff understand what ICS is/means and how this will influence/shape practice and service provision?
- Greater understanding and involvement with elected members to support work programme
- Decision making for care provision can at times be delayed, which could result in potential deconditioning of individual need and poor experience

3.9 The staff informed the peer team that there are frequently ten to fifteen adults requiring admission under the Mental Health Act, but there are no available beds (to note this is pan-Dorset including BCP Council area). There is a section 140 policy in place which is being reviewed in October, at this time consideration will be given as to whether an additional standard operating procedure is required. Dorset may also wish

to implement partnership escalation processes and/or a Memorandum of Understanding with the Mental Health NHS Trust concerning bed admissions.

3.10 The peer team felt that there was a disconnect between Place partners (Public Health, Primary Care Networks, and NHS), which appears to have resulted in lost opportunities to better comprehend health inequalities, population need, and a coordinated approach to support each other under the ICS agenda.

Theme 3 Ensuring Safety

This theme covers: safeguarding enquiries, reviews, Safeguarding Adult Board, safe systems, transitions and continuity of care

Safe Systems, Pathways and Transitions

Strengths

- Modern Slavery Lead in post
- Safeguarding Team have access to health systems to support immediate safety planning
- Regular meetings with CQC, provider quality team and safeguarding
- Large Scale Organisation Response process in place
- Self-Neglect assess on individual basis, practice guidance in place which clearly supports when it is safeguarding and when it is case management
- Exploitation Strategy in place
- MARM works really well, practice guidance developed and published, service users, carers invited to attend meetings
- Police local safeguarding hubs that collaborate closely with Safeguarding Team and MARM process, delivery plan in place
- Pan Dorset Suicide Prevention Network in place, chaired by public health
- Missing persons partnership protocol in place, launched last summer
- Good case examples given of Modern Slavery partnership working
- HERDER (MARAC) meet 4 days a week, partnership presence, monthly escalations meeting – innovative and effective way of managing volume of high risk/complex domestic abuse referrals
- Domestic Abuse advisor service in place

4.0 The Community Safety Partnership (CMP) offer, is extremely robust. The CSP is chaired by the cabinet portfolio member for Culture and Communities, and there are clear priorities in place which are jointly owned across partners. The CMP meet twice a year with Independent Chairs of the Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board.

4.1 The Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) is conducted in partnership with the Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board, and recent partnership training has been completed. A DHR Action Plan Review Group is in place and meets quarterly with

broad partnership representation. Together with the Council's Principal Social Worker, each partner organisation has a DHR lead who ensures that learning from DHRs is disseminated across the system to improve practice and process.

4.2 PREVENT and CHANNEL leads meet regularly and cascade updates to the senior leadership team. There are PREVENT leads in each council service area who meet monthly. There is a combined children and adult CHANNEL panel in place which is chaired by the Childrens Head of Service (deputy chair is the Adults Corporate Director). Additionally there is a peer support offer around PREVENT across the council.

4.3 The peer team learned how the council and partners in Dorset have effectively implemented High Risk Domestic Abuse (HRDA) meetings, a multi-agency response to high-risk cases of domestic abuse in Dorset. The new approach has resulted in faster multi-agency response times, increased cooperation between partner agencies, and improved outcomes for victims of domestic abuse throughout Dorset.

Considerations

- Serious Incident and lessons learned framework in development
- MAPPA and Community Safety Partnership linkage not yet developed but in progress
- MAPPA level 1 not discussed at MAPPA, involvement of probation and key agencies could be missed unintentionally

4.4 Although the council have introduced a Multi-Agency Risk Management (MARM) framework and have regular meetings to manage risk there is currently no governance, quality assurance or regular reporting of cases that takes place.

Safeguarding

Strengths

- Strong operational staff links across teams and partners in relation to sharing of information and intelligence (provider concerns)
- Transformational Safeguarding Position statement in place across SAB, Children and Community Safety with a clear plan to progress (green shoots)
- Safeguarding Team run regular webinars; county lines, domestic abuse and older people (very innovative)
- Natural justice principles considered when 'causing' provider to lead on enquiry
- Green shoots around MSP (KPI 85%) however, voice of service users and outcomes not always embedded

4.5 The peer team found that staff were committed and passionate to ensure the safeguarding adults with care and support needs. Staff evidenced that they had a clear understanding of safeguarding and relevant local safeguarding policies and

procedures. The council has a robust safeguarding training offer in place supported by the Learning and Team. The Portfolio holder for adult social care is actively involved in the safeguarding arena and as such cabinet members have received safeguarding training. All Safeguarding Adults Board partners have now signed up to the safeguarding secure professional's portal ensuring a consistent approach to the reporting of safeguarding concerns across all partner agencies.

Considerations

- Public Health is on the SAB but seen as a gap in terms of opportunity for joined up work and prevention.
- Approach and application of modern Slavery is an area for further development, (although recent case showed good partnership working)
- Strong operational staff links across teams and partners in relation to sharing of information and intelligence
- Transformational Safeguarding Position statement in place across SAB, Children and Community Safety with a clear plan to progress (green shoots)

4.6 Although the Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) strategy is in place not all partners understand or agree with it (raised by a member of one partner agency). The peer team acknowledge that Dorset SAB has been on a journey of change which has been positive, however the peer heard that not all partners feel connected.

4.7 Currently the Community Safety Partnership are not members of the Safeguarding Adults Board but do meet twice a year with the independent chair. The peer team found this unusual as most SABs have representation from the Community Safety Partnership and are seen as a valued and core member of the SAB.

Theme 4 Leadership

This theme covers: culture, strategic planning, learning, improvement, innovation, governance, management and sustainability.

Governance, Management and Sustainability

Strengths

- Clear mission statement with cabinet commitments including Adult Social Care
- VCSE have strong links to the local community and support in the wider prevention and early intervention agenda
- Positive steps to recruitment to support capacity and demand, i.e., peripatetic practitioners, central recruitment model and an inclusive employer
- People and Health Overview Committee, People and Health Scrutiny Committee, Place and Resources Overview Committee and Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee in place

5.0 The peer team were in agreement that the council has clearly demonstrated good leadership, financial and political stability. Considerable savings have been made through becoming a unitary authority and this has been reinvested into services to provide better outcomes for people.

5.1 The workforce are skilled, knowledgeable, passionate and committed to the residents of Dorset. There are positive steps in place to recruitment to support capacity and demand, such as the innovative peripatetic team previously mentioned. The council utilise a central recruitment model and there was evidence that they are indeed an inclusive employer. The wellbeing of staff is clearly embedded in the councils' values and many examples of staff's wellbeing being promoted was identified (redesign of AMHP Hub Model to ensure work life balance, Lone Working Safety and flexible working).

5.2 The performance management system is well-developed and employs a rigorous methodology, which promotes staff/management ownership and connects to critical areas such as service area budgets.

Considerations

- A detailed workforce strategy to retain staff and meet future demand, which is broader and more creative to attract future employees i.e., housing provision
- How will DC and BCP come together to ensure shared outcomes with the risk of different political priorities
- Ongoing level of change regarding continuity of service provision, staff wellbeing and message to wider partners and people who use services
- The community needs to understand what the vision is and what Dorset Council is aspiring to deliver

5.3 As previously mentioned adult social care has a significant transformation programme in place with many key priorities. Consideration may need to be given as to how this programme of change is articulated and what it means to different people (staff, residents, partners and providers) regarding what the programme actually is, what it will achieve, and how you will get there. There may also be the need to ensure that all members, including the opposition fully understand the transformation journey and commit to support in the role they can play.

5.4 Although the Quality Assurance Framework and approach is showing green shoots the council recognises that further work is required to ensure there is a robust audit and reporting cycle in place that is fully embedded. The new dashboard will also give greater opportunities to understand performance, provide assurance and reflect and shape the service going forward.

Learning, improvement and innovation

Strengths

- General feeling from staff that “things are moving in the right direction”

- Brave leadership on the Accelerator programme has enabled good outcomes with the Council ‘taking the first steps’
- Staff understand that leadership does not always have to come from ‘Dorset Council’ and feel enabled and autonomous in their role
- Workforce and residents are seen as assets with strong recognition programmes
- Joint leadership model on enablement is well embedded and demonstrates good outcomes

5.5 Through the Learning and Development Team's training offer, webinars, service area training sessions, and reflective sessions, the peer team discovered evidence of a continuous learning cycle. Through access to Dorset Council training, webinars, and learning, the VCSE and providers receive excellent support. Apprenticeships are available, and the ASYE programme provides robust learning and training opportunities. Future endeavours include the creation of a practice competency framework to facilitate career development and progression.

Considerations

- Wider involvement and engagement with members
- Simplified communication to ensure engagement and understanding by people who use services is essential to ensure inclusion –and co production
- Consider future performance metrics on local outcomes
- High volume of staff in interim roles has resulted in some inconsistency and progress with work programme
- The volume of transformation projects is high and needs to be balanced against business as usual/day to day operations to ensure this can be successfully delivered with staff and residents fully engaged

5.6 Carers and adults that receive services shared their experiences of engagement with adult social care services. These experiences were varied, with many people feeling that their voice is not always heard, and that communication could be improved and that they would like to be more involved in broader decisions regarding service provision and strategy. Dorset may wish to consider external support with coproduction from SCIE or Think Local Act Personal who offer support to local authorities in implementing a coproduction approach.

Immediate next steps

We appreciate the senior political and managerial leadership will want to reflect on these findings and suggestions in order to determine how the organisation wishes to take things forward.

As part of the peer challenge process, there is an offer of further activity to support this. The LGA is well placed to provide additional support, advice and guidance on a number of the areas for development and improvement and we would be happy to discuss this. **Paul Clarke, LGA Principal Adviser** is the main contact between your authority and the Local Government Association. His contact details are email:

Paul.Clarke@local.gov.uk, Telephone: 07899 965730. There is also the **LGA Care and Health Improvement Adviser for the South West, Jan Thurgood**. Her contact details are email: jan.thurgood@local.gov.uk, Telephone: 07442 934794.

In the meantime, we are keen to continue the relationship we have formed with the Council throughout this peer challenge. We will endeavour to provide signposting to examples of practice and further information and guidance about the issues we have raised in this report to help inform ongoing consideration.

Contact details

For more information about the Adult Social Care Preparation for Assurance Peer Challenge at Dorset Council please contact:

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LGA Peer Challenge Manager

Local Government Association

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For more information on the peer challenges and the work of the Local Government Association please see our website: [Council improvement and peer support | Local Government Association](#).

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Appendix 2 – Priority Action Plan

Local Government Association Peer Review Summary and Planned Action

Summary

In May 2023, the Adults & Housing Directorate invited the Local Government Association (LGA) to complete a peer review. This peer review was designed to support Dorset Council and its partners assess its current achievements, areas for development and capacity to change, as part of its preparation for the future Care Quality Commission (CQC) Annual Assurance regime.

The peer review found a great deal for the directorate to be proud and our assessors were particularly struck by the overall ambition passion and commitment they found when talking to partners and colleagues. Among the notable observations were that the directorate has:

- A clear political direction and strong senior leadership team.
- An ambitious and committed workforce that understands the clear vision, values and key priorities of the directorate.
- Strong budget management and ownership, with positive use of data to support.
- Innovation in many areas and market leading initiatives highlighted as national best practice.
- Good safeguarding practice and outcomes (highlighted by recent safeguarding audit).
- A clear commitment to the development of Housing.
- A very good Technology Enabled Care (TEC) offer which should be showcased as national best practice.
- Numerous good news stories of supported living for people with learning disabilities, which should be showcased.

The peer review report also recommended areas for us to review and seek improvements. A summary of the peer team recommendations and subsequent priority development areas are included within the table:

Ref	Theme	Area recommended for development	What will be delivered?	How will this be delivered?	RAG
1	Prevention	Enhance the local prevention and early help available for people when they need it	<p>Develop a “model” information and advice service, starting with online channel.</p> <p>Redesign our processes to reinforce a community asset based/wellbeing approach, with a focus on more early and self-help with a focus on TEC.</p> <p>Continue to enhance a range of preventative and community assets as described in our adopted commissioning strategies.</p>	Transformation Programme	GREEN
Page 58	Productivity Practice Co-production	<p>Find ways to improve productivity and processes to reduce the time people currently have to wait for an assessment, package of care, or a review of their needs.</p> <p>Ensure there is genuine co-production in developing our future offer and ways of working, both in our commissioning activity, and as we develop our future Operating model.</p> <p>Improve the Direct Payments offer to make them easier to obtain and what the payments review the range of things they can be used for</p>	<p>Getting first response and assessment right</p> <p>Developing direct payments as a potential swift solution for post-assessment.</p> <p>Moving effort into the right places</p> <p>Design and implement (learning by doing) changes in skill-mix and process so we break down barriers to appropriate speed and efficiency.</p> <p>Engage with people (co-production) about how they want to be supported, informed by data led insights, evaluate changes after they are made and calibrate where necessary.</p>	Transformation Programme	GREEN

		Reflect on the role of specialist practice functions across the Directorate i.e safeguarding	Review and amend current practice within "Business as Usual".		
3	Place	Respond to the varieties of place that exist within Dorset and how demographics which will change over time. Build on & develop local assets within communities, address different local needs and enhancing partnerships.	Deliver two "Vanguard" sites within the Operations redesign programme, trialling the development of a revised locality offer which can be replicated across other localities, based on the demographics and analysis of need.	Transformation Programme	GREEN
4	Performance	Having a 'single version of the truth' when it comes to our data. Improve our understanding of what our data is telling us.	The directorates Performance and Finance group will maintain oversight over the quality of the departments data, and that data quality considerations are embedded both in our business-as-usual work and transformation workstreams.	Finance & Performance Directorate Leadership Group	GREEN

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People and Health Overview Committee

17 October 2023

Adopting Care Experience as a Protected Characteristic

For Recommendation to Cabinet

Portfolio Holder: Cllr B Quayle, Children, Education, Skills and Early Help

Local Councillor(s): All

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

Report Author: Paul Dempsey / Kaye Wright
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Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

The Council and its Elected Members and employees are corporate parents to all of Dorset's children in care and care leavers. As corporate parents, it is the responsibility of Elected Members and officers to ensure that the children and young people that have been in our care receive the same opportunities that we would want for our own children. However, we know that people with care experience are more likely to face disadvantage and discrimination in society. To combat this, and in line with our ambitions to do the best for our care experienced young people, this report recommends that the Council adopts a position of treating care experience as a 'protected characteristic', as many other Council have.

Recommendation:

That the People and Health Overview Committee recommends that Cabinet:

1. Supports the development of an agreed definition of care experienced for the purpose of making this a protected characteristic.
2. Agrees that 'care experience' will be treated as if it were a Protected Characteristic under the Equalities Act 2010 so that decisions on future services and policies made and adopted by Dorset Council are assessed and consider the impact on people with care experience.
3. Approves the amendment of Dorset Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021-2024 to reflect 'care experience' being treated as if it were a protected characteristic and the development of specific actions to reduce the disadvantage and discrimination that care experienced people face.

Reason for Recommendation:

We are an ambitious council with high aspirations for our care experienced young people. Making care experience a protected characteristic will help to remove barriers to success for our care experienced young people and is in line with the recommendation to do so in the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, published in May 2022.

And as one of our young people said,

'As a care leaver, I think it is necessary that care experience is a protective characteristic. There is such bad stigma around being care experienced and it affects me massively in my day-to-day life. This law change is needed to stop prejudice against a group that already suffers disadvantages. A protective characteristic will create systemic change and will give voice to those who are most in need. Making care experience a protective characteristic can be a change that can start making a difference to the system'

1. Background

1.1 The Independent Review of Children's Social Care (MacAlister 2022) has highlighted the significant levels of discrimination and disadvantage faced by care experienced people, as follows:

- (i) "Many care experienced people face discrimination, stigma and prejudice in their day to day lives. Public perceptions of care experience centre on the idea that children are irredeemably damaged and that can lead to discrimination and assumptions being made" (MacAlister 2022)
- (ii) "Hearing testimony from care experienced people sharing the discrimination they have experienced, even from a very young age, it is clear that such discrimination can be similar in nature to other groups that have a legally protected characteristic under the Equality Act (2010)" (MacAlister 2022)
- (iii) MacAlister (2022) made the recommendation in his report that 'Government should make care experience a protected characteristic' and concluded that this would 'provide greater authority to employers, businesses, public services and policy makers to put in place policies and programmes which promote better outcomes for care experienced people.'
- (iv) The Government are yet to commit to making care experience a protected characteristic, but there are a growing number of local authorities acting locally. At the time of writing 46 local authorities nationally had passed motions adopting care experience as a protected characteristic, including most recently, neighbouring Devon County Council.

1.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is a duty imposed on all UK public bodies by Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, to take equalities considerations into account when exercising any of their functions and taking decisions. This includes giving due regard to achieving the following:

- (i) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.

- (ii) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - (iii) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic.
- 1.3 The equality duty covers the following protected characteristics; age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership.
- 1.4 'Care Experience' is not classified as a protected characteristic. The term has no statutory basis but is an umbrella term used to refer to individuals who are, or who have been, in care.
- 1.5 In treating care experience as if it were a protected characteristic, it means that Dorset Council must actively and explicitly take the needs of this cohort into account in all future policy and decision making. This will include a requirement to undertake Equality Impact Assessments that explicitly consider the needs of this cohort of people.
- 1.6 Extending the definition of protected characteristics also places a duty on the authority to include details about care experience in the annual publication of information relating to people who share a protected characteristic in services and employment. This will enable the council to measure and monitor the impact of services and policy decisions on this cohort more meaningfully.
- 1.7 Recognition of care experience as a protected characteristic is a decision which 46 local authorities have already taken, including Devon County Council, to recognise the disadvantage many young adults face because of their care experience.

2. **Local Impact**

- 2.1 Care leavers in Dorset have consistently shared that they feel disadvantaged as a person with care experience and often feel discriminated against. This only serves to reinforce the importance of the motion in this paper.

2.2 There are around 530 Dorset Council care leavers aged 18-25 but there are many more people living in Dorset over this age who would currently benefit from the recognition of care experienced as a protective characteristic. Adoption of this motion will support Dorset Council, and its partners, to improve their cultural awareness around care experience, embed corporate and community parenting principles across partner organisations and act as a lever for change and equity.

2.3 As our care experienced young people have said:

'Making care experience a protective characteristic will help more care leavers feel like they are able to thrive rather than just surviving'.

'Recognising their (care leavers) experience as a protected characteristic empowers people to demand fair and equal treatment from employers and educators. The legal side of it will help if they are mistreated because of their background'.

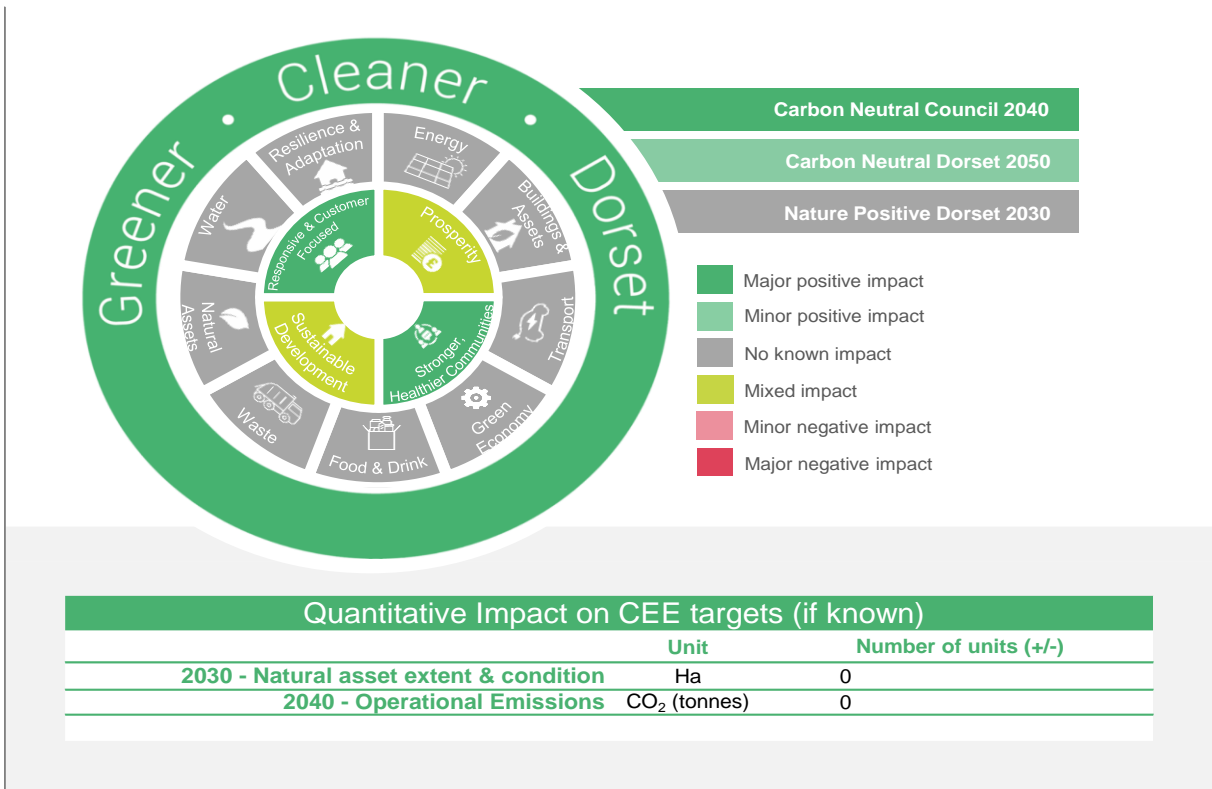
'Care experienced people face significant barriers which impact us throughout our lives, and despite the resilience of many care experienced people, society too often does not take our needs into account'.

'As a care leaver, my life is impacted by the stigma around being care experienced - for example, housing, education, relationships, and employment'.

3. **Financial Implications**

3.1 There are no direct financial implications for adopting care experience as a protected characteristic. Work to update policies and procedures will be led by our Equalities and Diversity Officer within Corporate Development, with support from Children's Services colleagues, enabling a whole council approach. The work required is limited and can be managed within existing resources but is likely to include work to agree a specific definition of 'care experienced', workforce development activities, and amendments to other relevant policies.

4. **Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications**



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

5.1 Recognition of care experience as a protected characteristic is not likely to cause any detrimental impact on the emotional health and wellbeing of care leavers. It is anticipated that a more accepting and positive environment will improve the wellbeing of our care leavers.

6. **Other Implications**

There are no other identified implications.

7. **Risk Assessment**

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

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

8. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 8.1 The whole purpose of this report's recommendation is to promote equality of opportunity and equality of outcomes for care experienced people in Dorset.

9. Appendices

Accessible Impact Assessment & Table of Recommendations

ACCESSIBLE TABLE SHOWING IMPACTS

Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Strategy Commitments	Impact
Energy	No known impact
Buildings & Assets	No known impact
Transport	No known impact
Green Economy	No known impact
Food & Drink	No known impact
Waste	No known impact
Natural Assets & Ecology	No known impact
Water	No known impact
Resilience and Adaptation	No known impact

Corporate Plan Aims	Impact
Prosperity	neutral
Stronger healthier communities	strongly supports it
Sustainable Development & Housing	neutral
Responsive & Customer Focused	strongly supports it

Accessible Impact Assessment & Table of Recommendations

TABLE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations	Responses -will this be incorporated into your proposal? How? And if not, why not?
Energy	
No recommendations found for this category	
Buildings & Assets	
No recommendations found for this category	
Transport	
No recommendations found for this category	
Green Economy	
No recommendations found for this category	
Food & Drink	
No recommendations found for this category	
Waste	
No recommendations found for this category	
Natural Assets & Ecology	
No recommendations found for this category	
Water	
No recommendations found for this category	
Resilience & Adaptation	
No recommendations found for this category	

10. **Background Papers**

[Independent review of children's social care - final report
\(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

[Children, Young People and Families' Plan 2023 to 2033 - Dorset](#)

People and Health Overview Committee

17 October 2023

The Families First for Children Pathfinder Delivering the Government's Stable Homes, Built on Love Strategy

For Recommendation to Cabinet

Portfolio Holder: Cllr B Quayle, Children, Education, Skills and Early Help

Local Councillor(s): All

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

Report Author: Paul Dempsey
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Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

Following a national review of children's social care, the government has written a new strategy '*Stable Homes Built on Love*', with 6 pillars or themes for transformation. Dorset, along with two other local authorities, have been invited to test out an element of this strategy. This paper provides an overview of the approach the council is taking to implementation, outlines the governance and sets out the required tasks and timelines for the programme moving forward.

Recommendation:

1. The People and Health Overview Committee is invited to comment on the approach to the implementation of the national pathfinder and the progress to date.
2. The People and Health Committee recommends to Cabinet that this approach is adopted by the Council.

Reason for Recommendation:

Participation in the Pathfinder programme is a huge opportunity for Dorset to shape the national transformation of children and families strategy and policy and to ensure that Dorset Council is well placed to implement these policy changes when they are rolled out nationally. Department for Education funding will be made available and will be used to support the required change.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Independent Review of Children’s Social Care published its final report in May 2022. The Review was described as a “once-in-a-generation opportunity” to set out a bold and broad plan to improve outcomes for children and families. The big question it sought to answer was: How do we ensure children grow up in loving, stable, and safe families and, where that is not possible, that care provides the same foundations?
- 1.2 The review found the current system to be increasingly skewed towards crisis intervention, with outcomes for children unacceptably poor, and costs continuing to rise. It reported that without a ‘radical reset’ of the whole system, outcomes will remain poor, and in a decade’s time the children in care population will have increased from 80,000 to 100,000, and costs will increase to £15billion from £10billion now.
- 1.3 ‘Stable Homes, Built on Love’, published in February 2023, is the Government’s strategy for implementing the recommendations of the Review.
- 1.4 The Strategy sets out six pillars to transform children’s social care. These are as follows:
 - Family Help provides the right support at the right time so that children can thrive with their families.
 - A decisive multi-agency child protection system.
 - Unlocking the potential of family networks.
 - Putting love, relationships, and a stable home at the heart of being a child in care.
 - A valued, supported and highly skilled social worker for every child who needs one.

- A system that continuously learns and improves and makes better use of evidence and data.
- 1.5 The Government is sponsoring several test and learn pathfinder programmes to test out delivery of some elements of its strategy before they roll it out nationally. Dorset is one of three local authorities nationally who have been selected to deliver the Families First for Children Pathfinder Programme.
- 1.6 This Pathfinder involves designing a new model of provision to deliver the following elements of the strategy:
- **Family Help:** The establishment of locally based multi-disciplinary Family Help teams that work collaboratively with partners to provide intensive, non-stigmatising and effective support that is tailored to the needs of children and families.
 - **Child Protection:** A child protection response led by social workers with greater expertise and experience working as part of a dedicated multi-agency child protection team. These child protection lead practitioners will work alongside family help to protect children who are suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm.
 - **Family Networks:** Participating local areas will make greater use of family networks, with earlier use of family group decision making throughout Family Help and Child Protection systems, facilitated by targeted funding to enable more children to live at home or support a transition into kinship care.
 - **Safeguarding Partners:** Local statutory safeguarding partners will be fully engaged in the operate with clear roles and responsibilities for statutory safeguarding partners at both a strategic and an operational level, and with an increased and possibly statutory role for education.
- 1.7 In summary, the ambitions of the Pathfinder are to deliver:
- Deeper integration and partnerships in child protection and family help.
 - More support and help to families early, preventing crisis.
 - Support to enable families and family networks to make their own decisions and plans to keep children safe.
 - An enhanced safeguarding role for education at the strategic level.

2 Progress since June 2023

- 2.1 When we reported to this Committee in June the paper was exempt from the public as the Department for Education (DfE) had not announced our involvement nationally at that stage. Subsequently, on 26th July, the DfE announced that Dorset, Lincolnshire, and Wolverhampton had been selected as Pathfinders for Families First for Children
- 2.2 We have signed a Memorandum of Understanding setting out how we will work with the DfE on the programme, and we have received an initial £200,000 seed funding.
- 2.3 A delivery partner, a partnership of Mutual Ventures and Innovation Unit, have been identified to work alongside us to support us to deliver the programme and develop a community of learning and practice across pathfinder sites nationally.
- 2.4 We have mapped our current model of provision against the minimum requirements set by the DfE in the pathfinder design specification. We have also drafted a plan for how we will co-design our new model of provision. Both documents have been submitted to the DfE.
- 2.5 We have submitted an initial costed plan to the DfE setting out how much additional funding we need to deliver our new model and what this will be spent on. This costed plan will change iteratively as we co-design our model and will be formally agreed towards the end of October. We do know that the grant funding available for us is up to £1.8m in 2023/24 and up to £2.5m in 2024/25. This is in addition to the £200k we have already received. Our costed plan requests the full £4.3m. However, we have stated to the DfE that this full amount is not sufficient to do all that we want to do to deliver a full model of provision.
- 2.6 We have established a Families First for Children Programme Board. This is chaired by Theresa Leavy (Executive Director – People Children), and includes representatives from across the partnership, the voluntary and community sector, with Ofsted and the DfE on the extended membership as observers. The first meeting was on 7th September and this meeting went well.
- 2.7 We have set up the necessary structures to undertake our co-design work and have clarified the scope of the work we will need to undertake. In many areas, our local conditions for success are already meeting the DfE minimum requirements. In addition to the DfE requirements, we have also set our own ‘must have’ elements for our model. The co-design work will look at how to deliver the set requirements/elements and how we should

shape our model where we have some flexibilities. Co-design with children and families will be based on feedback we have collected previously, engagement activity ongoing currently, and commencement of new engagement activity where we have gaps in our knowledge/feedback.

- 2.8 Our partners are well briefed and engaged on the background, purpose, and scope of the work. The next stage will be to get into the finer detail of what the proposed changes mean in practice.
- 2.9 The co-design period will run from mid-September to the end of October. The final deliverable for the co-design period will be a fully costed model and implementation plan. There is an expectation that implementation will commence from end of November 2023.
- 2.10 The wider portfolio of children's transformation work will now be consolidated into the Pathfinder programme.

3 Financial implications

- 3.1 Participation in the Pathfinder presents an opportunity to secure a level of DfE funding to undertake the change and development work required that is unlikely to be available for other authorities once the Pathfinder programme has finished.
- 3.2 The initial costed plan that was submitted to the DfE includes high level detail of how we intend to use the grant funding to deliver the pathfinder reforms. This plan can and will change during co-design but is likely to include the following categories of spend:
 - Seconding/backfilling roles in police/health to support development of the programme and deeper integration.
 - New/additional roles in the Multi-Agency Family Help and Child Protection spaces (examples include, family help workers, youth practitioners, advanced practitioners)
 - Programme management roles
 - Enhancements to the learning and development offer for staff in line with the new model
 - Commissioning services differently (e.g., in the early support space)

- 3.3 The maximum funding we have been advised we will receive is not sufficient to deliver all the reforms as stated in the DfE design specification. Therefore, the submission of the costed plan included commentary to this effect.
- 3.4 The grant funding allocation runs to the end of 2024/25, and we have costed up to this point. It is our expectation that there will be an uplift to the settlement for Children's Services in Dorset and nationally for 2025/26 and beyond to account for the costs of delivering the Government's Strategy thereafter.

4 Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications

- 4.1 There are no implications for the environment, climate, and ecology other than that there may be benefits that may arise from a reduction in cross country travel if this strategy is successful in creating more local care placements for Dorset and for other authorities around the country.

5 Well-being and Health Implications

- 5.1 The aim of the Government Strategy is to improve the lives, and the health and wellbeing of children, young people, and families. Successful delivery of the strategy in Dorset will bring improvements to the health and wellbeing of our children, families, and communities.

6. Other Implications

- 6.1 Participation in the Pathfinder will put Dorset on the national stage, leading the implementation of a national strategy and with a responsibility and an expectation that we will thereafter support others on their own implementation journey.
- 6.2 There will be implications for some of our staff who may experience a change to their role, but we will not know exactly how this will look until we have completed our co-design work.

7 Risk Assessment

- 7.7 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 Successful implementation of the Government Strategy will improve the lives of the most vulnerable children and families in our communities.
- 8.2 We will be undertaking an Equalities Impact Assessment on any potential changes.

Appendices/Background Papers

Stable Homes, Built on Love: Implementation Strategy and Consultation: Available at [Children's social care: stable homes, built on love - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612222/childrens-social-care-stable-homes-built-on-love-implementation-strategy-and-consultation.pdf)

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People and Health Overview Committee 17 October 2023 Report on the Dorset Education Board

For Review and Consultation

Portfolio Holder: Cllr B Quayle, Children, Education, Skills and Early Help

Local Councillor(s): All

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

Report Author: Amanda Davis
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Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

The local authority's statutory responsibilities for educational excellence are set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. A local authority must promote high standards in education. This duty is discharged within the context of increasing autonomy, changing accountability for schools and the expectation that schools themselves should lead improvement.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 was amended by the Education and Adoption Act 2016, whereby intervention can be taken by the Secretary of State when a school is underperforming.

Just over a third of our schools are maintained, with two-thirds now academies and more schools planning to join trusts as the current expectation is that all schools should academise by 2030. There are currently 18 different academies in Dorset. Many of our maintained schools express feeling very satisfied with support from the local authority. We have one free school in the Dorchester Locality. This is funded by government but is not managed by the local authority and does not have to follow the national curriculum. There are two colleges, providing further education, one of which includes a higher education element.

The Dorset Education Board has identified priorities and developed plans to continuously improve the education of children and young people and to achieve our aspiration of Best Education for All. Activity initiated through the board has started to make a positive difference for children and young people.

Recommendation:

Members of the committee are invited to comment on the progress made and impact of the work of The Dorset Education Board.

Reason for Recommendation:

Education in Dorset plays a significant role in helping us achieve our Council Plan. High quality education can help to drive economic prosperity through increasing social mobility and creating a skilled workforce for the future. Education settings can also play a pivotal leadership role and be at the heart of the communities they serve, supporting community cohesion and connection. The delivery of an exciting curriculum that enables children and young people to love the place they live and benefit from our wonderful natural environment can be achieved through the strong leadership of our education community.

1. Ofsted Outcomes – Good and better

1.1 In academic year 2022/23, Ofsted outcomes improved, with more schools in Dorset now graded Good or better. Schools have risen to the challenge of a robust inspection framework to support this improving picture. The local authority has provided direct and detailed support through advice, guidance, and information to support self-evaluation and school improvement. As a result, 84% of schools in Dorset are now Good or Better (compared to 88% nationally). Of these, 86% are maintained schools and 81% are academies. In August 2022 (prior to the start of last academic year) Dorset was 78% and National 88%, so this represents a marked improvement.

2. Attainment and Progress

2.1 In November 2022 the board was presented with provisional outcomes from the summer test and assessments. When compared to pre-pandemic outcomes primary assessments in Dorset had higher rankings when compared to other local authorities. However, in some cases, weaknesses in outcomes prior to the pandemic had worsened. The board considered the relative position for 2022, and how outcomes had changed since 2019.

- 2.2 Assessments at early primary stages were above national, but Key Stage 2 (Year 6) was shown to remain a concern, with outcomes below national. 55% of Dorset children achieved the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths, compared to 59% nationally.
- 2.3 Key Stage 4 tests at Secondary showed results broadly in line with national averages, although the numbers achieving higher grades was below national. Destinations of pupils were considered, with the types of destinations tending to reflect the nature of the options available in a rural county where transport is a contributing factor.
- 2.4 In January 2023 the board was presented with further detail and analysis. There was a focus on outcomes for groups of pupils including pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and those eligible for free school meals. This group tends to underperform nationally, but this is a particular issue in Dorset. The gap between those eligible and those not eligible was shown to have increased to levels similar to those ten years ago.
- 2.5 In March 2023 the board was presented with a deep dive on Key Stage 2. Dorset has some of the lowest outcomes at Key Stage 2 of all local authorities, and this has been the case for some time. Some of the underlying issues such as Middle Schools were discussed before moving onto specific subjects and groups of pupils. There was a particular focus on the performance of girls in maths, which was widened to include low progress figures at key Stage 4.
- 2.6 A task and finish group dedicated to improving attainment outcomes for girls in Maths has been established and we are implementing a robust plan for this academic year for improvement of mathematical teaching and learning for girls of all ages, with the aim of sustaining strong attainment for boys and of improving outcomes in maths overall.
- 2.7 Further work has commenced and will be undertaken in academic year 2023/24 to improve attainment for all and narrow the gap for children who are disadvantaged. We are fortunate that some schools in Dorset work well with their communities and enhance outcomes for children and we will continue to draw on great practice. In some areas more focused work is required.
- 2.8 A particular example of focused work is in Weymouth and Portland where we have a dedicated project with all headteachers across primary and secondary and including Weymouth College, to agree key areas of focus to help improve children's achievements. This group of headteachers are

particularly interested in schools being at the hearts of the communities they serve and want to work to make generational positive change and to improve social mobility. We have commenced work with nationally renowned organisations including Challenge Partners and the Buckinghamshire Challenge (Marc Rowland, Deputy Director of the National Education Trust and recognised expert on the Pupil Premium) to develop a plan specific to Weymouth and Portland.

- 2.9 We are also working with the Department for Education on agreeing an enhanced and formal approach to supporting and challenging our Multi-Academy Trusts across Dorset. We have high expectations of all providers to enable our children to achieve through experiencing an enriching and engaging education.
- 2.10 Results for summer 2023 are currently being ratified and finalised. Early indications are that outcomes for our children remain below where they should be. At this stage we are assured the focus of the board is right and that our plans are well placed. We do not underestimate the significant leadership and improvement needed across the education community. Our strategy to draw on and share the best practice in the county as well as best national and international practice, is the right ambition for our children and young people.
- 2.11 The Education Strategy, to be published in January 2024, will ensure all priority areas of work are underpinned by plans to ensure we deliver our aspirations as set out in the Children, Young People and Families Plan.

3 Attendance

- 3.1 The board have been notified of absence rates over the academic year, with a notable rise in absence, and also a doubling of the numbers of children and young people with persistent absence (i.e. missing 10% or more of sessions), and severe absence (missing 50% or more of sessions). This information was shared alongside a presentation on the importance of good attendance, how it was linked to good outcomes (and thus life chances), but also how important good attendance was in relation to social and emotional development. The board also agreed that attendance supports safety.
- 3.2 We have developed an Attendance Strategy which has been used as an exemplar by the Department for Education. An Attendance Working Group has been established to support improved educational attendance in our county. We have undertaken round tables in all localities and have seen

an improvement across first /primary / middle schools but not yet a real improvement across secondary / upper schools. We will continue to develop practice to improve attendance in education.

4. Student Pledge

- 4.1 Our student pledge, to be published in January 2024 has been supported by our educational settings enabling us to have conversations with children and young people. Stephen Twigg (Independent Chair of the Dorset Education Board), Amanda Davis (Corporate Director for Education and Learning) and Hanna Baxter (Youth Voice Officer) have visited a range of schools and settings to gather information about children's lived experiences in their communities and in school. We also spoke to children who are young carers, members of youth parliament and youth council and children who are electively home educated. In addition to this, our annual Takeover Challenge provided opportunities for hearing directly from children and young people.
- 4.2 Children and young people described their need to experience a deep sense of belonging in school and in the places they live, grow and learn. They need to feel listened to by emotionally available adults and for adults to understand the unique experiences and gifts they bring to the communities they are part of. They need to be able to share worries and feel safe, wherever they are, and wish to be able explore and express their identity and celebrate their cultural heritage. They would like their emotional wellbeing to be strongly supported and they feel safest when adults supporting them are professionally confident and competent.

5. Workforce Pledge

- 5.1 We have created a task and finish group to develop a Workforce Pledge to understand the needs of the workforce within the education community of Dorset and to establish a plan to address workforce wellbeing, continuous professional development for excellent teaching and learning and recruitment and retention. The board wish to celebrate the joy of being part of an education community and the privilege of being able to support learning.
- 5.2 Members of the board have shared experiences of recruiting and retaining employees in key posts such as learning assistants, maths teachers and, in some areas of the county, headteachers.

- 5.3 They have also shared that the emotional wellbeing of employees is of paramount importance. A confident and resilient workforce is needed to meet the needs of children and families, in the wider context of covid recovery, cost of living and a rise in special educational needs.
- 5.4 The board heard from a local occupational therapist and educator, Caroline Essame, who has worked across the world in clinical practice and educational development. Her determination is to enhance workforce wellbeing through evidence-based approaches to workforce development and reminds us that playfulness and fun is at the heart of highly effective education systems.
- 5.5 At our annual conference in June, Mary Myatt was a keynote speaker. Mary is an education adviser, author, former teacher and inspector who has written extensively about school leadership and the curriculum. As part of her work with us, Mary is providing curriculum tools to our maintained schools. We have also selected schools who may benefit from access to these materials, to enhance the outcomes for children and young people. We do this in negotiation with the DFE and the academy trust or school. We believe such materials are key to enabling the education workforce to provide high quality teaching and learning in our schools.

6. The Dorset Curriculum

- 6.1 In 2019 “An Unequal Playing Field” was published by the Social Mobility Commission. It reported on the benefits of extra-curricular activities for children and demonstrated the inequity of access to such activities. We want all of our children to have culturally rich and rewarding experiences, drawing on the beautiful natural environment in Dorset. Our children and young people have told us that, in addition to formal learning, they welcome experiences that enable them to live independently and feel confident about adult life. They enjoy opportunities to make friends and socialise in non-formal settings, to escape pressures and have fun. The board is committed to establishing a Dorset Curriculum that will enable every single child and young person in Dorset access to a menu of experiences.

7. Belonging

- 7.1 The board hear regular reports on suspensions and permanent exclusions. Both had reduced during the pandemic and after lockdown but are now on the rise. As such, the board is focused on children remaining

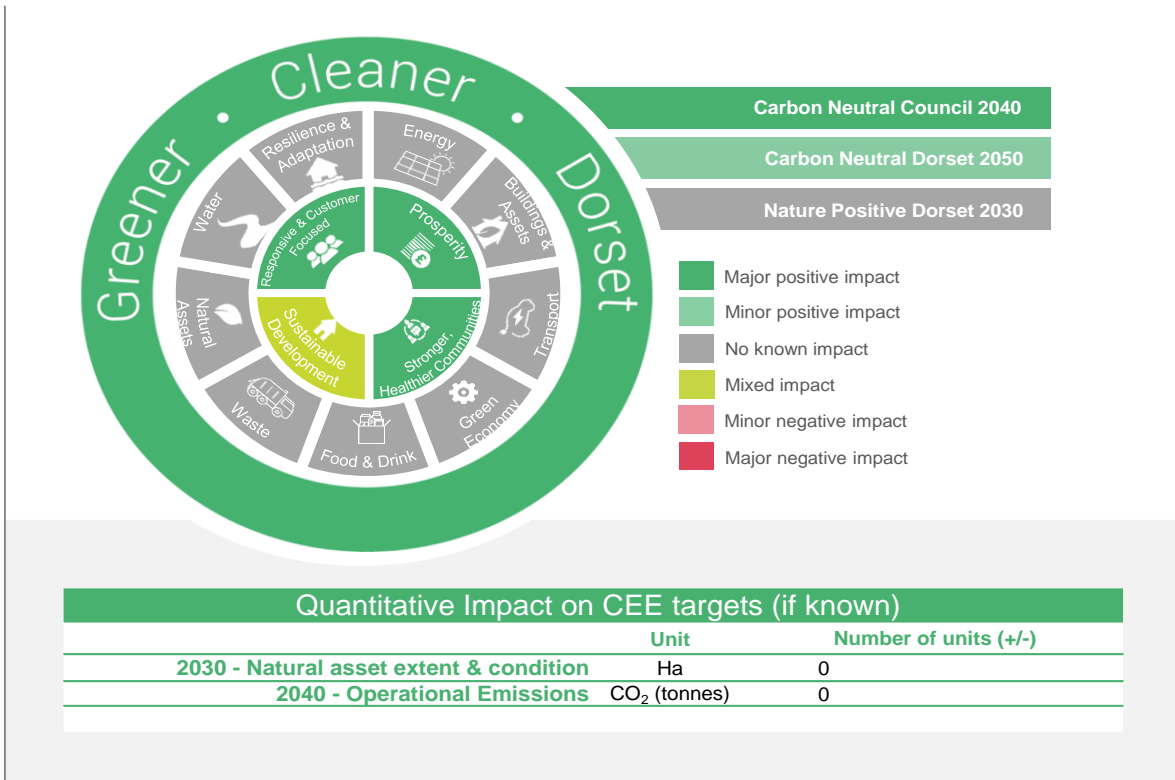
in school and being supported to regulate their emotions and communicate their needs, and for adults to understand and provide for their needs with confidence, drawing on evidence-based practice. Our commitment to Therapeutic Thinking will see an increase in educational settings accessing this training. All children's services staff will also undertake the training.

- 7.2 In June 2023, we held our annual conference on the theme of "Belonging". The board commissioned a film which shows young people describing what helps them to feel they belong. A feeling of safety, caring teachers, family and friends are at the heart of what enables children and young people to experience a deep sense of belonging.
- 7.3 In October we will launch our Belonging Strategy. This has been co-produced with children, young people, schools, parents and carers and key partners. The strategy will set out how we will enable all children and young people to feel they belong to their community and their place of learning.
- 7.4 Our Local Alliance Groups have been awarding grants to promote inclusion and belonging of children and young people in school and in communities, through the Covid Outbreak Management Fund and we are starting to see a positive difference for children and families. Examples of funding include walking buses in Weymouth, a refurbished classroom at Dorset Hospital for children on Kingfisher Ward that is now an inviting learning environment that enables children to forget they are unwell and learn in a non-clinical but safe environment, and family cooking classes.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 Activity undertaken on behalf of the board is supported through existing budgets and does not require additional funding.

9. Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications



10. Well-being and Health Implications

10.1 In supporting the work of the Dorset Education Board, it is likely the wellbeing of children and young people is enhanced through improved educational attainment, better attendance in education and enjoyment of the natural environment as well as extra-curricular activities.

11. Other Implications

None

12. Risk Assessment

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

Current Risk: Low
Residual Risk: Low

13. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 13.1 As it has been found that certain groups are currently disadvantaged in terms of attendance and educational outcomes, it is implicit in the work of the Dorset Education Board that disadvantage is well understood and that evidence-based and innovative practice is enabled to address inequality.

14 Appendices

- 14.1 None

15 Background Papers

- 15.1 People and Health Overview Committee: March 24th 2022 - Education Leadership Board available at :
<https://moderngov.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=652&MId=5102>
- 15.2 Cabinet: April 2022 – Education Leadership Board available at:
<https://moderngov.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/documents/s29048/Education%20Leadership%20Board%20Recommendation.pdf>

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People & Health Overview Committee

17 October 2023

Expansion of funded childcare offer from April 2024

For Recommendation to Cabinet

Portfolio Holder: Cllr B Quayle, Children, Education, Skills and Early Help

Local Councillor(s): All

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

Report Author: Liz Curtis-Jones
Job Title: Principal Lead for Best Start in Life
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Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

This report provides an overview of the implementation of the new national expansion of funded early years childcare offer from April 2024 introduced by the Chancellor in the Spring Budget Statement, where he announced a phased rollout to offering 30 hours of free childcare for every child over the age of 9 months with working parents. The offer is being phased in from April 2024 until September 2025.

The Childcare Act 2006, and Early Education and Childcare statutory guidance, gives local authorities a duty to secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, childcare provision for children aged 0-14 and up to 19 for children with disabilities. The provision should be sufficient to meet the requirements of parents/carers to enable them to work or undertake education or training leading to work, and for their child to access their free entitlement childcare place.

For families, increased access to paid work will bring additional income into households supporting with the impact of the cost of living.

Recommendations:

1. The People and Health Committee is invited to comment on the approach to implementation of the national childcare funding policy and the progress to date.
2. The People and Health Committee recommends to Cabinet that this approach is adopted by the council.

Reason for Recommendation:

To ensure compliance with statutory duties and any subsequent related statutory guidance to ensure there is sufficient childcare for working families.

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of the implementation of a new national policy to increase the eligibility for funded early years education/childcare with effect from April 2024. It sets out the implications for the local authority, and how we will support the sector.
- 1.2 Currently funded childcare for up to 15 hours per week is available only to parents of 2-year-olds living in England on particular income related benefits or for particular groups of 2-year-olds including children in care or those who have left care; children with an education, health and care plan; or in receipt of Disability Living Allowance. This funding is only provided for children attending provision rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted.
- 1.3 In the Spring Budget Statement (2023), the Government has set out a package of measures to increase childcare support for working parents. Working parents in England will be able to access 30 hours of free childcare per week, for 38 weeks of the year from when their child is 9 months old until they start school. It will be rolled out in phases:
 - From April 2024, all working parents of 2-year-olds will be able to access 15 hours per week
 - From September 2024, all working parents of children aged 9 months up to 3 years old will be able to access 15 hours per week.
 - From September 2025 all working parents of children aged 9 months up to 3 years old can access 30 hours free childcare per week
- 1.4 In order to support this expansion the government has:
 - Committed to uplift the hourly rate paid to providers delivering existing free hours offers and increase funding available to providers to facilitate the expansion.
 - With effect from 4th September 2024, made changes to the standards in the [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#), the guidance that all early years providers must follow – to offer greater flexibility to providers including on staff ratios to support this change.

- Introduced start-up grants for new childminders, including those who register with a childminder agency of £600 for those who register with Ofsted and £1,200 for those who register with a childminder agency.

1.5 From April 2024, the Government are introducing a new funding formula to fund local authorities in respect of children aged 2 and under and will organise additional termly data collections to support the rollout of the new funding. Funding levels for providers have been set for 2023 to 2024 as follows:

- 2-year-old funding will increase from £5.68 to £7.53 per hour
- 3-&4-year-old funding base rate will increase from £4.41 to £4.73 per hour. Additional supplements are paid to settings in areas of deprivation, and there is discretion to provide supplements to other settings who may need additional funding.
- Early Years Pupil Premium Funding is provided when settings support children from a range of disadvantaged groups and will increase from 0.62p to 0.66p per hour.
- Disability Access Funding (DAF) can be used to support reasonable adjustments so that children with disabilities are able to attend settings. This will increase from £828 per annum to £881 per annum.

1.6 In addition to expansion of funded children care in the early years, the government have also set out expectations that by 2026 most primary schools will be able to deliver childcare support – before and after school. In Dorset this will include middle schools. This is sometimes called wrap around childcare provision. 16 local authorities have been selected to receive funding from the government to pilot this approach.

2. Our current position

2.1 In Dorset, there are 318 childcare providers registered with Ofsted able to deliver the existing funded childcare offer. This includes a combination of registered childminders, pre-schools, and full daycare provision. There is a mixed market of provision with delivery undertaken by schools; local authority; private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector. The majority of our early years providers are judged ‘Good or above’ at their last inspection. We support the sector through allocated Early Years Support and Advice Officers who provide information, advice, and training to the sector.

2.2 Since the announcement of the policy, we have been engaging with providers about how they will be able to meet the new childcare offer and they have been invited to tell us how we can help them. Concerns that have been identified include:

- Recruitment of qualified staff to support expansion at a rate that is sufficient to support the likely increased demand from parents/carers.
- Impact of the proposed funding mechanism dropping from the higher rate of funding for 2-year-old children to the lower rate when the child becomes eligible for 3-year-old

funding. This would mean an average income reduction per child accessing 15 hours per week of £45

- Impact of increased wrap around provision provided by schools leading to a reduction in demand for childcare from the PVI sector, particularly childminders. This type of provision provides valuable income streams for providers and helps with sustainability of their business model.

3. Our approach to the implementation of the national childcare funding policy

3.1 Based on engagement with settings our plan to support the implementation of this new national policy locally will fall into 3 main categories: Financial Sustainability, Recruitment and Retention and Understanding demand.

3.2 To support **Financial Sustainability**, we will:

- Allocate short term sustainability funding as part of the council's Covid recovery response. Settings that would benefit from this approach are identified through a business survey and submission of evidence.
- Consult with the settings about the approach to the funding formula for 3- and 4-year-olds in preparation for April 2024. This is a statutory requirement and will be carried out in this autumn term.
- Continue to offer Early SEND support funding to support the inclusion of children aged under 5 years
- Signpost settings to the business support advice offered by the council.
- Continue to pay early years providers on a termly basis, with half paid at the start of the term based on estimated numbers and the remaining balance at half term following submission of actual numbers. This helps prevent cash-flow issues

3.3 **To support the sector with Recruitment and Retention we will:**

- strengthen partnerships with schools and colleges careers advisors to encourage entry into the childcare workforce through apprenticeships, level 2 and 3 qualifications and degree pathways.
- ensure childcare is represented at careers fairs promoting childcare as an attractive and desirable career for all.
- strengthen the pathway for those interested in becoming a registered childminder and promoting this option through partners for example, midwives and health visitors
- Offer training and support to settings through our Early years Advisors and facilitate learning events on best practice

3.4 **To help the sector to understand demand we will:**

- Carry out consultation with families about their childcare needs in October 2023 to help us meet the initial rollout date of April 2024.
- This will be published and shared with the sector in November 2023 to support their expansion planning.

3.5 Additionally, although Dorset is not one of the 16 local areas involved in piloting wrap around childcare, we are participating in DfE events to take the learning so that we can support primary schools to deliver the wraparound provision offer from September 2026.

4. **Financial Implications**

4.1 Completion of an Early Years Spring Census drives the level of funding which is paid to Dorset Council through the Early Years Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant. Dorset Council then distribute this funding to providers, based on a funding formula that uses actual hours the child attends the setting.

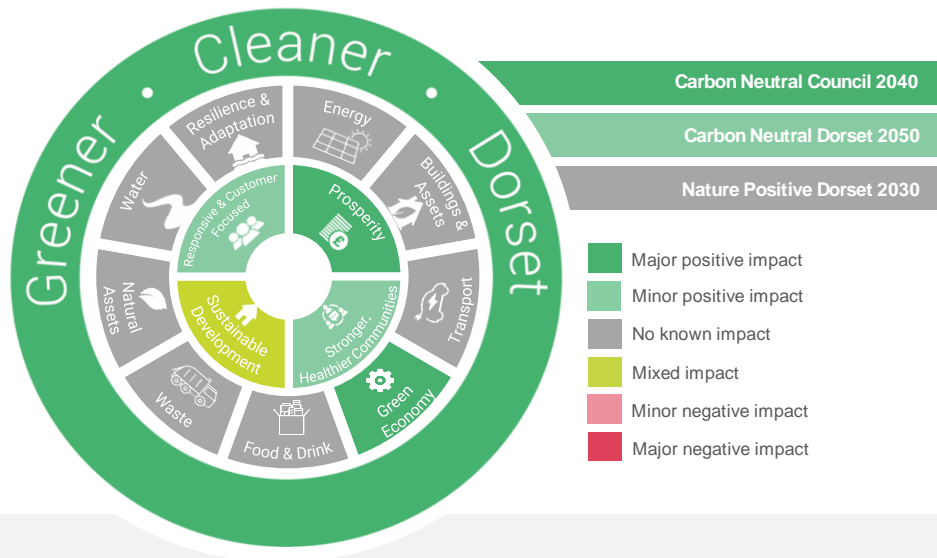
4.2 From April 2024, the Government are introducing a new funding formula to fund local authorities in respect of children aged 2 and under and will organise additional termly collections to support the rollout of the new funding.

4.3 Dorset Council has responded to a recent DfE consultation to highlight the following concerns:

- The level of funding being adequate to support high quality childcare and education.
- Special educational needs and disability being adequately supported for young children. Unless there is additional funding into the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant, the most vulnerable children could miss out.
- It is a concern that the indicative 2-year-old rate for 2024-25 is lower than the 2-year-old rate 2023-24 including the Early Years Supplementary Grant (in Dorset £7.53, dropping to £7.36).

5. **Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications**

5.1 **Climate Emergency Colour Wheel**



Carbon Neutral Council 2040

Carbon Neutral Dorset 2050

Nature Positive Dorset 2030

- Major positive impact
- Minor positive impact
- No known impact
- Mixed impact
- Minor negative impact
- Major negative impact

Quantitative Impact on CEE targets (if known)

	Unit	Number of units (+/-)
2030 - Natural asset extent & condition	Ha	0
2040 - Operational Emissions	CO ₂ (tonnes)	0

5.2 A recommendation was made to provide advice and/or signpost businesses to sources of information on how they can become more resource efficient. See Appendix 1, 10.1 and 10.2. We will do this as part of our business support providing information, advice, and training to early years practitioners.

6. Well-being and Health Implications

6.1 Access to work for parents and carers will contribute towards economic growth, reduced poverty, skill development and improved quality of life for families. Access to quality early years provision supports cognitive skills, social and emotional development and communication and language skills in readiness for school. The early years curriculum also supports physical health promoting healthy habits including nutrition and exercise. Often the early detection of developmental delays are also picked up leading to effective interventions.

7. Other Implications

7.1 N/A

8. Risk Assessment

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

Current Risk: Low
Residual Risk: Low

9. Equalities Impact Assessment

9.1 As part of their consultation on the new childcare funding arrangements, the Government published an [Equality Impact Assessment](#). Their conclusion reflected there are some positive, negative, and neutral impacts however, overall, the decision was taken to roll out the new arrangements.

9.2 Through the provision of information, advice and training we support providers to consider all aspects identified in the equalities impact assessment, carry out risk assessments and support settings to plan for mitigations.

10. Appendix 1

10.1 Accessible table showing impacts:

ACCESSIBLE TABLE SHOWING IMPACTS

Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Strategy Commitments	Impact
Energy	No known impact
Buildings & Assets	No known impact
Transport	No known impact
Green Economy	major positive impact
Food & Drink	No known impact
Waste	No known impact
Natural Assets & Ecology	No known impact
Water	No known impact
Resilience and Adaptation	No known impact

Corporate Plan Aims	Impact
Prosperity	strongly supports it
Stronger healthier communities	minor positive impact
Sustainable Development & Housing	neutral
Responsive & Customer Focused	minor positive impact

10.2 Table of recommendations

TABLE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations	Responses -will this be incorporated into your proposal? How? And if not, why not?
Energy	
No recommendations found for this category	
Buildings & Assets	
No recommendations found for this category	
Transport	
No recommendations found for this category	
Green Economy	
No recommendations found for this category	
Food & Drink	
No recommendations found for this category	
Waste	
No recommendations found for this category	
Natural Assets & Ecology	
No recommendations found for this category	
Water	
No recommendations found for this category	
Resilience & Adaptation	
No recommendations found for this category	

11. Background Papers

11.1 Spring Budget 2023 Factsheet – Labour Market Measures. Available at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/spring-budget-2023-labour-market-factsheet/spring-budget-2023-factsheet-labour-market-measures

11.2 Gov.UK News story Chancellor unveils a Budget for growth. Available at:

www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-unveils-a-budget-for-growth

11.3 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework. Available at:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2

11.4 Early Education funding – guidance on how LAs and early years providers are funded
[Early years funding: 2023 to 2024 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-funding-2023-to-2024)

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