



The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE)

Date: Monday, 5 June 2023
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Council Chamber, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

Members (Quorum: 3)

Cllrs Spencer Flower (Chairman), Laura Beddow, Byron Quayle, Jane Somper and Gary Suttle

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

For more information about this agenda please contact Democratic Services Meeting Contact chris.harrod@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. | APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN | |
| | Following the Cabinet re-shuffle and subsequent change in membership of the Shareholder Committee, a new Vice-Chairman is to be appointed by the Leader of the Council. | |
| 3. | MINUTES | 5 - 8 |
| | To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting. | |
| 4. | 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.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Representatives of town or parish councils and members of the public who live, work, or represent an organisation within the Dorset Council area are welcome to submit up to two questions or two statements for each meeting. Alternatively, you could submit one question and one statement for each meeting.

All submissions must be emailed in full to chris.harrod@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk by 8.30am on Wednesday 31 May 2023.

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

- no more than three minutes will be allowed for any one question or statement to be asked/read
- a question may include a short pre-amble to set the context and this will be included within the three-minute period
- please note that sub divided questions count towards your total of two
- when submitting a question please indicate who the question is for (e.g. the name of the committee or Portfolio Holder)
- Include your name, address and contact details. Only your name will be published but we may need your other details to contact you about your question or statement in advance of the meeting.
- questions and statements received in line with the council's rules for public participation will be published as a supplement to the agenda
- all questions, statements and responses will be published in full within the minutes of the meeting.

[Dorset Council Constitution](#) Procedure Rule 9

6. 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 chris.harrod@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk 8.30am on Wednesday 31 May 2023

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

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|------------|--|--------------|
| 7. | TERMS OF REFERENCE | 9 - 12 |
| | To note the Terms of Reference for the Shareholder Committee. | |
| 8. | DORSET COUNCIL COMMISSIONING REPORT | 13 - 18 |
| | To consider the report. | |
| 9. | DCOE - REPORT OF INDEPENDENT CHAIR OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS | 19 - 24 |
| | To consider the report. | |
| 10. | FORWARD PLAN | 25 - 28 |
| | To consider the Forward Plan. | |
| 11. | 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. | |
| 12. | EXEMPT BUSINESS | |
| | To move the exclusion of the press and the public for the following items in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within meaning of paragraph 3 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. | |
| 13. | Business Plan <i>Para 3</i> | To Follow |
| | To consider the Business Plan. | |

Please note: At time of publication the Business Plan is awaiting final approval by the Board of Directors and will be published as a supplement to this agenda as soon as practicable.



THE SHAREHOLDER COMMITTEE FOR THE DORSET CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE (DCOE)

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 13 MARCH 2023

Present: Cllrs Spencer Flower (Chairman), Andrew Parry (Vice-Chairman), Laura Beddow, Gary Suttle and Peter Wharf

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

Ian Comfort (Chair of the Dorset Centre of Excellence Board),
Grace Evans (Head of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer),
Chris Harrod (Senior Democratic Services Officer),
Andrew Holder (Managing Director of the Dorset Centre for Excellence),
Theresa Levy (Executive Director of People - Children) Via MS Teams,
Jonathan Mair (Director of Legal and Democratic and Monitoring Officer),
John Miles (Democratic Services Apprentice),
Matt Prosser (Chief Executive),
Claire Shiels (Corporate Director - Commissioning, Quality & Partnerships)

35. Apologies

No apologies were received.

36. Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 5 December 2022, were signed and confirmed as a correct record.

37. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

38. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

39. Councillor Questions

No questions were received from councillors.

40. Forward Plan

The Forward Plan was noted.

41. **Report of the Independent Chair of the Board of Directors**

The Chairman of the Board introduced his report, which set out the activity that had taken place since his previous update in December.

Officers responded to comments and requests for clarification, details included:

- The Terms of Reference for the Board's Finance Sub-Committee had recently been reviewed and had a considerable amount of work to be undertake, which meant that it was meeting approximately every six weeks.
- The Chairman of the Sub-Committee was a chartered accountant, with significant experience in education and the rest of the sub-committee's membership were well-experienced with matters of a financial nature. The Sub-Committee was currently charged with reviewing the budget, development of the business plan and ongoing financial projections.
- Day to day financial reporting was now easily accessible, including management accounts, which had proved to be exceptionally useful. An audit was to be undertaken at year end, and so strong desire from the Board to ensure accounts were up to date.
- Since the Head Teacher had been appointed and had been in post since January, the Managing Director could focus on the strategic aims of the school, which had not been possible beforehand as he had been overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school.
- The feedback from the staff and pupil surveys was being collated to be fed back to the Board of Directors, although initial feedback indicated that parents/carers were more engaged and that the situation at school is improving. In terms of staff results, feedback had been positive and tri-angulated with other data available.
- A committee had been established by the Board of Directors to explore opportunities for community outreach and perform the kind of 'deep dive' exercise that wasn't possible in standard board meetings, which was proving to be positive in terms of engagement and developing a long-term leisure strategy that would maximise community use.
- Data surrounding the usage and financial profile would be available at the next shareholder committee and would form part of the business plan to be put forward at the next meeting of the Shareholder Committee.
- The Board was putting a huge amount of time and resource into ensuring that the school is in an inspection ready situation based on the action plan that it had submitted. The Managing Director was Confident that OFSTED would find a greatly improved school and governance structure. It was in the hands of OFSTED to determine whether standards had been consistently met, and how it was going to measure this i.e. from launch of the school, or from submission of the action plan.

Noted

42. Dorset Council Commissioning Report

The Corporate Director for Commissioning and Partnerships introduced her report, which provided an overview of the current position relating to the enhanced cooperation between Dorset Council and the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE), and the progress made in the recovery plan.

Officers responded to comments and requests for clarification, details included:

- It was anticipated that there would be some growth in terms of pupils after Easter for the summer term. The School was inclusive and worked exceptionally had to ensure that all needs were met by the school and that they could remain in this provision
- The Business Plan was being revised which had impacted the pace of delivery, however, this was being closely monitored and was not expected to impact the council's capital strategy, as information continued to be shared as appropriate.
- There had been an intensive period of support for the school and Monitoring visits were frequent to ensure that the school is delivering on its aims and was well supported during its establishment phase and fully complying, once this had been achieved, it was agreed that monitoring would be done half-termly.
- Contrary to some comments that had been made in the media and speculation on social media, there was indeed a need for Dorset Council to increase SEND capacity in both North and East Dorset.

Noted

43. Urgent Items

There were no urgent items

44. Exempt Business

There was no exempt business

Duration of meeting: 10.30 - 10.55 am

Chairman

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Dorset Centre of Excellence Shareholder Committee

Terms of Reference

1. Role/Terms of Reference and Membership

a. The Dorset Centre of Excellence Shareholder Committee shall be primarily responsible for the following delegated functions except where specific functions have been delegated to an Officer:

- monitoring the performance of the DCOE (including in relation to Business Plans and associated budgets);
- monitor the business affairs, finances, and accounts of the DCOE;
- overseeing the strategic direction of the DCOE or proposed and adopted business plans and budgets for future years to be presented in draft as they are developed or the review of future service developments and opportunities;
- considering the risks and opportunities faced by the DCOE and impact on the Council (including, for example, in relation to commercial factors, governance issues, and health and safety records);
- monitoring DCOE compliance with relevant legislation;
- assuring that DCOE status as a 'Teckal' company is maintained;
- taking decisions that relate to any matter identified as being reserved to be taken by the Shareholder ("Council Consent" matters) listed within Appendix 1, within the Articles of Associations and/or the Shareholder Agreement for the DCOE.

Provided that where a decision affects the Council budgetary framework the Shareholder Committee will consider the decision and provide a recommendation to Full Council.

- exercising the Shareholders reserve power by Special Resolution (in accordance with item 5 of the Articles of Association).
 - reporting and making recommendations to the Cabinet on areas outside of the Shareholder Committee's delegated authority.
 - reporting to Full Council annually on the performance of the trading activities of the DCOE.
 - reviewing these Terms of Reference annually and make any necessary recommendations to Cabinet.
- b. The Shareholder Committee will not have operational control over the DCOE. All decisions regarding the day to day operation and management of DCOE rests the DCOE board of directors, which must ensure that DCOE business is conducted in accordance with the terms of the Shareholders' Agreement entered into between the Council and DCOE (Shareholders' Agreement) and in accordance with DCOE articles of association.
- c. The Shareholder Committee shall comprise of 5 Members drawn from the Cabinet to be appointed by the Leader of the Council/Cabinet.
- d. The quorum of the Shareholder Committee shall be 3 Members.
- e. There shall be no power to appoint substitutes to the Shareholder Committee.

- f. The Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer, Monitoring officer and Executive Director People – Children (or their nominees) will be advisors to the Shareholder Committee. Additional advisors and DCOE officers and directors may be invited to attend the Shareholder Committee as required.

2. Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

The Leader of the Council/Cabinet will appoint the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Shareholder Committee.

3. Meetings

- a. The number of ordinary meetings of the Shareholder Committee each year will normally be quarterly unless otherwise determined by the Leader of the Council.
- b. The Chairman of the Shareholder Committee shall have the power to call one or more special meeting(s) of the Shareholder Committee.
- c. The Chairman of the Shareholder Committee may determine that a meeting should be cancelled for insufficient business.

4. Delegated powers and powers of recommendation of the Shareholder Committee

- a. The Shareholder Committee shall have the powers as set out in Functions of the Council - Part 3(1) of the Constitution.
- b. For the avoidance of doubt the Shareholder Committee can delegate any of their powers to any Officer.

Appendix 1

Council Consent Matters (Shareholder Agreement Schedule 1)

- 1 No Company shall, unless it has Council Consent:
 - 1.1 vary in any respect its articles of association or the rights attaching to any of its shares/ members; or
 - 1.2 appoint any person as a director of the Company; or
 - 1.3 permit the registration of any person as a member/ shareholder of the Company; or
 - 1.4 issue any loan capital or enter into any commitment with any person with respect to the issue of any loan capital; or
 - 1.5 make any borrowing; or
 - 1.6 propose that its members pass any resolution for its winding up or present any petition for its administration (unless the Company has become insolvent); or
 - 1.7 engage in any business other than as set out in the Company's Business Plan or defraying any monies other than in good faith for the purposes of or in connection with the carrying on of such business; or
 - 1.8 form any Subsidiary or acquire shares in any other company or participate in any partnership or joint venture (incorporated or not); or
 - 1.9 amalgamate or merge with any other company or business undertaking; or
 - 1.10 alter its name or registered office; or
 - 1.11 enter into any transaction or arrangement of any nature whatsoever with any of the Company's members or directors or any person who is connected (within the meaning of sections 1122 and 1123 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010) to any of its members or directors whether or not any other person shall be party to such transaction or arrangement; or
 - 1.12 enter into any arrangement, contract, or transaction outside the normal course of the Company's Business or otherwise than on arm's length terms; or
 - 1.13 create or permit to be created any mortgage, charge, encumbrance, or other security interest whatsoever on any asset or its business in whole or in part; or
 - 1.14 adopt or amend its annual Business Plan save in accordance with clause 2.4 of the Shareholder Agreement, or enter into any contract or commitment not provided for in the Business Plan under which it may incur costs in excess of £100,000; or
 - 1.15 change its financial year end; or
 - 1.16 make any loan (otherwise than by way of deposit with a bank or other institution the normal business of which includes the acceptance of deposits) or grant any credit (other than in the normal course of trading); or
 - 1.17 give any guarantee, suretyship, or indemnity to secure the liability of any person or assume the obligations of any person; or
 - 1.18 factor or assign any of the book debts of the Company; or

- 1.19 establish or amend any profit-sharing, share option, bonus, or other incentive scheme of any nature for directors, officers, or employees; or
- 1.20 establish or amend any pension scheme or grant any pension rights to any director, officer, employee, former director, officer or employee, or any member of any such person's family other than in accordance with the Remuneration Policy; or
- 1.21 dismiss any director, officer, or employee in circumstances in which it incurs or agrees to bear redundancy or other costs in excess of £10,000; or
- 1.22 agree to remunerate (by payment of fees, the provision of benefits-in-kind or otherwise) any director, employee or consultant to the Company save in accordance with the Remuneration Policy; or
- 1.23 make any agreement with any revenue or tax authorities or make any claim, disclaimer, election, or consent exceeding £25,000 for tax purposes in relation to the Company or its business; or
- 1.24 breach the terms of the Company's Code of Conduct; or
- 1.25 issue or allot any share capital; or
- 1.26 amend, in any material respect, the terms and conditions on which any employee of the Company is employed, save in accordance with the Remuneration Policy; or
- 1.27 change the nature of the Business or commence any new business by any Group Member which is not ancillary or incidental to the Business; or
- 1.28 make or permit to be made any change in the accounting policies and principles adopted in the preparation of its audited or management accounts except as may be required to ensure compliance with relevant accounting standards under the Companies Act 2006 or any other generally accepted accounting principles in the United Kingdom; or
- 1.29 appoint or remove the Chair; or
- 1.30 institute, settle or compromise any material legal proceedings instituted or threatened against it or submitting any dispute to arbitration or alternative dispute resolution, save in relation to any legal proceedings, arbitration or alternative dispute resolution between the Company and the Council; or
- 1.31 make any acquisition, disposal, or structural modifications of any material asset(s), leases, or land interests; or
- 1.32 allow any of its employees, agents, or officers to reside within the premises unless specified within the service contract between the Council and the Parent Company; or
- 1.33 give notice of termination of any arrangements, contracts, or transactions in excess of £50,000 in value, or materially vary any such arrangements, contracts, or transactions; or
- 1.34 consent to proceed with capital development of any material asset(s) such as on the land it operates; or
- 1.35 enter into an agreement to do any of the above.

The Shareholder Committee of the Dorset Centre of Excellence

5 June 2023

Commissioners Report

For Decision

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

Local Councillor(s): Cllr

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

Report Author: Claire Shiels
Job Title: Corporate Director Commissioning and Partnerships
Tel: 01305224682
Email: claire.shiels@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

This report provides an overview of the current position in relation to the enhanced cooperation between Dorset Council and the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE) and the progress made in the recovery plan previously described in earlier meetings.

Recommendation:

Shareholders are asked to note the progress made and support the continued cooperation between the council and the Dorset Centre of Excellence.

Reason for Recommendation:

Progress continues to be sustained enabling the company to focus on welcoming more children to the school and developing the business plan.

1. Report

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of the current position in relation to the enhanced cooperation between Dorset Council and the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE). Regular contract review meetings have continued

focused on the performance of the school, with continued engagement between the Managing Director of DCOE and the Strategic Commissioner for SEND and Commissioner attendance at the Board has continued. Regular operational meetings are in place to support conversations about individual children and to plan admissions.

- 1.2 Contract management continues to focus on assessing progress on the priority action plan, stability and operation of the school and preparation for any future Ofsted Inspection. Nearly all actions in the priority action plan are complete and Commissioners have requested a revised plan incorporating learning and the results of the future Ofsted Inspection.
- 1.3 Commissioners can report that the Executive Leadership Team and the Board of Directors are making overall good progress. A summary of progress against some critical areas is provided below:
 - **Governance:** regular Board meetings with functioning sub-committees are in place. These are meeting regularly and operating effectively to provide assurance, support and challenge to the executive leadership team.
 - **Recruitment and retention:** recent open days and recruitment activity has been successful in supporting recruitment of new teachers which will support the planned growth into the next academic year. All teaching vacancies for September are filled with clear plans for recruitment of teaching assistant vacancies.
 - **Ofsted preparation:** external advice and assurance has been sought focusing on curriculum, culture and safeguarding. The report identified many areas of strength and contract management focuses on tracking progress of the delivery of the improvement plan submitted to the Department for Education following previous inspection activity.
 - **Pupil growth:** Current numbers on roll are expected to be 56 at the end of term with a phased plan for growth over the next 3 years as the staff team grows and more classrooms are made more available. Transition planning is underway for these additional pupils with an induction pack and other activity being planned to start engaging with families to support a steady start.
 - **Key Performance Indicators:** the report for Spring Term 1 and 2 has been reviewed. There are no notable performance issues.

Work is underway to further improve performance against KPIs such as pupil participation in Annual Reviews and pupil progress.

- **Pupil Experience:** in the recent survey of pupils the majority of pupils feel supported by teachers to do their best, are challenged and feel safe. The approach to 'over coming barriers' to enable pupils to progress is holistic and, although at early stages, is being used to plan for individual pupils, with plans to develop its use further.

A coordinator has been appointed for Annual Reviews, with a focus on creative approaches to supporting pupils to have a strong voice in the review; this will be important in increasing pupils' participation. Other pupil voice activity includes a school council and forums.

- **Community Engagement:** progress is being made in community use of the leisure facilities with a local SCUBA club planning to use the facilities again and a small group of Friends of Shaftesbury Swimming planning to pilot community swimming sessions, this will be used to develop an effective delivery model in the near future to allow a model of delivery to be refined. In May DCOE hosted and supported an event for the North Dorset Cycle Ride; providing practical resources and obstacle course/games. It is positive that DCOE also used this as an opportunity to engage with local stakeholders on generating new ideas on how to support local organisations going forward. Future plans include working with Shaftesbury Town Council regarding establishing a Park Run for the local community within the grounds and exploring options through the master planning work for the site.

1.4 The enhanced co-operation agreement remains in place, however the executive leadership team and the board of directors are now in a place where the support from Dorset Council officers has significantly reduced. A summary of the position against each is provided below:

- Fortnightly contract reviews continue.
- Regular operational meetings continue but are not required to be on a weekly basis.

- Admissions process – joint working continues to identify new pupils to attend this term and beyond.
- On-site presence of DC officers – this continues to be at the expected levels.
- Commissioner attendance at the board continues.
- Joint approach to complaints and communications – DCOE are fully leading this, with no input from Dorset Council required.
- Recruitment activity – continues to be successfully led by DCOE.
- Support Offer – all DC support offered continues to be accepted and action taken as a result. This is primarily focused now on planning for growth.

1.5 The company has been working on the development of the business plan which will be presented in the exempt part of this meeting.

2. **Financial Implications**

2.1 Following the previous shareholder committee, commissioners have worked with the company to agree a new block contract for the summer term, with a planned increase in numbers over the summer term. Fee price has been maintained at the previously agreed rates.

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

3.1 None identified at this stage.

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

4.1 The health, safety and wellbeing of children and employees is of paramount importance so close collaboration between Dorset Council and the Dorset Centre of Excellence will continue.

5. **Other Implications**

None identified

6. **Risk Assessment**

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

Current Risk: Medium

Residual Risk: Medium

7. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

7.1 Not required for this report

8. **Appendices**

None

9. **Background Papers**

None

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Dorset Centre of Excellence Shareholder Committee

5 June 2023

Report from Chair of Board

For Decision

Report Author: Ian Comfort

Title: Director and Chair, Dorset Centre of Excellence Ltd

Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

This report provides an update on the current situation at the Dorset Centre of Excellence (“the Company”) and the Coombe House School (“the School”). It considers progress made in relation to governance, leadership, staffing, estate, community use and finance.

The Shareholder is asked to note the content of this report and to continue its support for the Company.

Reason for Recommendation:

The Board, with the support of colleagues from Dorset Council, continues to make progress towards its objectives. The Board is mindful that the ongoing support through enhanced cooperation with the Council is ensuring the viability of the Company.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Shareholder is aware of the background to the opening of the School in May last year and of the improvement trajectory since.

2. **Coombe House School**

- 2.1 Coombe House School (the “School”) continues to improve. The new Headteacher who had only just taken up post at the last Shareholder Committee meeting is now well-embedded and having a strong impact.
- 2.2 The Managing Director and the members of the Quality and Curriculum Committee continue to hold a significant role in supporting the quality improvements that are ongoing.
- 2.3 As part of its commitment to driving improvement, the Company has commissioned significant independent external quality assurance support since the last committee meeting.
- 2.4 A two-day visit from a highly regarded ex-Ofsted inspector and former Multi-Academy Trust CEO led to a promising report that reflected the progress being made by the School. This report has been shared with the Council.
- 2.5 In addition, support from a consultant who until recently was responsible for training independent special school inspectors in the southwest has worked with the Company to provide training around the Independent School Standards and has advised on certain policy decisions.
- 2.6 In May 2023, the School participated in the TCS Mini London Marathon. With many other mainstream and specialist settings across the country, this was an attempt to break the world record for the largest number of pledges to participate in a sporting event. It involved all pupils and staff organising and completing one-mile laps of our school field, with a fun-based focus on participation and enjoyment. This first ‘whole school event’ was symptomatic of the School’s increasing stability and an improving sense of community.
- 2.7 The School is pleased to have reached a level of confidence in its stability to recommence admissions. It is working closely with the Council to ensure that it does so in line with their commissioning requirements.
- 2.8 The School continues to await its scheduled visit from Ofsted. In preparation for the visit, evidence to show the Independent School Standards are met continue to be strengthened.

3. **Commercial and Community Activities**

- 3.1 The Company was pleased to host local families to the site on Sunday 14 May 2023 as part of the North Dorset Cycle Ride arranged by the Shaftesbury Rotary Club. The Company provided accommodation, resources, and personnel to organisers, who arranged refreshments, obstacle courses and fun games. The event was well received by the attendees and acted as an excellent community consultation opportunity, with many new ideas coming regarding how we can reach out and support local organisations in the future.
- 3.2 There has been much progress with community use of the leisure facilities. Liaison with the 'Friends of Shaftesbury Swimming' group has been positive and a small group of members have agreed to pilot community swimming sessions in the near future to allow a model of delivery to be refined. A local SCUBA club, who previously used the pool, has agreed to recommence their booking and shall begin these before the summer holidays. A partnership agreement is nearing completion with a reputable swim school that will provide the Company with a rental income in return for providing high quality swimming tuition to local children. They have been selected partially as they have strong credentials around inclusion and supporting children with additional needs.
- 3.3 During the summer holidays in 2023, the Company is nearing an agreement with a local Short Breaks provider to offer day provision to local families for two weeks. This shall act as a pilot for future operations, where it is hoped this offer can be expanded.
- 3.4 The Company is moving on with its planning regarding its offer of training and conference facilities. In the first instance, this will occur within its existing buildings. Initial bookings have been made for a meeting of Educational Psychologists in July 2023 and for some Youth Worker training in October and November 2023. An organisation that offers short break provision has also shown interest.
- 3.5 The Company has worked with Shaftesbury Town Council regarding establishing a Park Run for the local community within the grounds. Much work has been done to apply for grants so that this could be setup efficiently. A member of a local running group, who is also a Town Councillor is assisting in scoping suitable routes.
- 3.6 The wider community and commercial opportunities at the site are being explored to ensure they are maximised through a comprehensive master

planning exercise. This will help confirm optimal uses for each area of the site and will provide clarity about how our intentions can be realised.

4. Business Planning

- 4.1 The Company welcomes the opportunity to work with the Council to plan the development of further classrooms for the School so that new accommodation shall be ready to aid growth beyond September 2024.
- 4.2 The new business plan that is due for consideration by the Shareholder Committee restates a commitment to the Company achieving its original aims. The provision of residential care and short break opportunities for local children and their families are described, as is a training facility and community access to the leisure facilities.

5. HR Update

- 5.1 The Company has made significant progress with its recruitment efforts. After a period where recruitment had been challenging, all teaching vacancies for September 2023 are filled and the small number of remaining teaching assistant vacancies for the same date are on track to be filled.
- 5.2 Improvements are thought to be linked to the general improvements that have been made in recent months, leading to a changing and improving perception of the Company as a more attractive option for those seeking employment opportunities.
- 5.3 Improvements to the nature of the messages being spread by word-of-mouth alongside some of the specific marketing efforts of the Company have had an impact. Beyond this, the Company's open day was particularly successful, with excellent attendance, very pleasing feedback and a subsequent receipt of high-quality applications. The Company continues to focus upon its People Strategy, where becoming a local employer of choice through an offer of competitive remuneration and benefits, innovative working patterns and a focus on wellbeing is the intended outcome.

6. **Finance**

- 6.1 The Company has started to finalise the year end accounts for financial year 2022/23. Through careful management, the Company is likely to report a financial position that exceeds its forecast.
- 6.2 The Company adopted a provision budget for 2023/24 based on those detailed within the late drafts of the proposed business plan and in April 2023 has demonstrated an ability to adhere to this budget.
- 6.3 The Company is demonstrating increasing credibility regarding its financial management, with a strengthened Board and new colleagues within the Executive having a significant impact.
- 6.4 The Company is confident that it has set out a pathway for ongoing financial security.

7. **Financial Implications**

- 7.1 The Company is working with the Council on financial modelling and business planning to reach a financial position that allows it to securely continue with plans to grow.

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

- 8.1 There are no climate implications associated with this report.

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

- 9.1 The Board has a duty to ensure the health, safety and well-being of its staff and the children attending the School. It has been mindful of this when considering the transition of children into the School; how it builds numbers; and how it provides community use of facilities.

10. **Other Implications**

- 10.1 No other implications have been identified.

11. **Risk Assessment**

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

Current Risk: High

Residual Risk: Medium.

12. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

12.1 The Board has not conducted an Equalities Impact Assessment for this report.

13. **Appendices**

13.1 There are no appendices to this report

14. **Background Papers**

14.1 There are no background papers included with this report.



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

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> |
|---|--|----------------------|--|--|

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.