

Date of committee: 10 September 2024

Date published: 12 September 2024

Date of implementation: 20 September 2024

**DECISIONS OF THE CABINET
10 SEPTEMBER 2024**

The following decisions were made by the Cabinet on 10 September 2024 and will come into force and may be implemented on 20 September 2024 unless the decision is called in for scrutiny.

In accordance with the council's constitution, any six members of the same relevant Scrutiny Committee may request the Monitoring Officer to 'call-in' a decision for scrutiny. The Monitoring Officer will be provided with written notice that will identify the decision to be called-in and the ground for the call-in when the request is made. If satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for the proposed call-in, the Monitoring Officer will notify the decision-maker of the call-in within 5 clear working days. The deadline for this request is **19 September 2024**.

The full call-in procedure is set out in the Constitution or for further information and advice please telephone Kate Critchel on 01305 252234

6 QUEEN ELIZABETH LEISURE CENTRE

Decision

- (a) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (b) That, Cabinet notes that the Council already contributed £276,160 towards condition works prior to 31 March 2024 and a further £604,407 had been provided to the Trust as part of the exit arrangements, to be spent by March 2025
- (c) That, Cabinet notes that as the Council had no legal interest in the leisure centre, the future use of the facility was a matter for the Trust to determine.
- (d) That, Cabinet agreed to progress and accelerate the Leisure Strategy to ensure there was a strategic and informed approach to leisure provision which would deliver the Council priorities of building stronger and healthier communities
- (e) Cabinet agreed that, in the event that the trust brings the swimming pool back into operation, to use reasonable endeavours to work with the trust and community groups to identify ways in which the pool can be made available for school and community group usage.
- (f) Recognising that realistic, affordable solutions were available to facilitate public use of the leisure centre, Cabinet committed to providing reasonable officer support to the trust to assist them in achieving that outcome.

Reason for the decision

The council was in the process of developing a new leisure strategy that would enable it to consider and adopt a more strategic and informed approach to the way it operated its leisure facilities and services.

The council did not own the Queen Elizabeth Leisure Centre and its leisure spend across the East Dorset area was considerably higher than other areas of Dorset Council. A key aim of the leisure strategy would be to address this issue.

Feedback from local swim groups had highlighted the value of the swimming pool at QELC and the importance of being able to access it. This included Wimborne Wagtails Swimming Club for the Disabled, who for 30 years had provided swimming sessions to a diverse group of disabled swimmers of all ages with physical, learning and hidden disabilities.

Dorset Council had contributed funds to enable improvements to the swimming pool air handling system, pool plant, pool hall roof and wet side changing areas. The trust had stated that the pool air handling and roof works were being looked at and being worked towards. They already had experience of operating a local school swimming pool with school and community group use and had suggested a similar model for QELC. This could complement the other sports facilities which were currently being made available for school and community club use. Dorset Council would be fully supportive of this proposal.

7 ASPIRE ADOPTION SERVICE

Decision

That the Aspire Adoption Annual Report and Statement of Purpose be approved.

Reason for the Decision

Cabinet was satisfied that the Aspire Statement of Purpose accurately described the activities that the agency discharged on behalf of Dorset Council and the Annual Report satisfied the report that these activities were discharged to a high standard in the last year.

8 PAN-DORSET SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 2023 - 24

Decision

That the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children's Partnership Annual Report April 2023-24 be approved.

Reason for the decision

Work had already commenced and would continue under the new Dorset Safeguarding Partnership which came into effect on 1 August 2024.

9 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY (EDI)

Decision

- (a) That Cabinet supports the adoption and supporting definitions for the 7 local protected characteristics.
- (b) That Cabinet approve the EDI Strategy and Action Plan 2024 – 2027
- (c) That Cabinet approve the supporting detailed EDI Action plan which covered the period 2024 – 2027.

Reasons for the decision

To ensure that Dorset Council's workplace and services were meeting the need of everyone, we had the responsibility to listen and respond better. As one of the county's largest employers, we also had responsibility to lead by example.

11 NITROGEN REDUCTION IN POOLE HARBOUR SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT WITHDRAWAL

Decision

That the Nitrogen Reduction in Poole Harbour Supplementary Planning Document be withdrawn.

Reason for the decision

Since Natural England updated their advice on nutrient neutrality in March 2022, the Nitrogen Reduction in Poole Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was no longer considered to offer a robust mechanism for delivering nitrogen mitigation in the Poole Harbour catchment. The SPD therefore needed to be formally withdrawn to enable an alternative approach for delivering nitrogen mitigation within the Poole Harbour catchment.

12 CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED REFORMS TO THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK AND OTHER CHANGES TO THE PLANNING SYSTEM

Decision

That the response to the consultation questions, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet – 10 September 2024, be submitted to Government by the 24 September deadline. *The suggested responses included support for many of the proposals, but concern about the effects of the increased housing targets for Dorset.*

Reason for the decision

The proposed changes could support the council's strategic priorities of driving economic prosperity and creating sustainable development and housing, but the significant increase in housing targets was likely to conflict with the aim of protecting the natural environment, climate and ecology, due to the environmental constraints of Dorset.

Introducing new targets so quickly would result in much development taking place as a result of the "presumption in favour of sustainable development" rather than through the more strategic plan-led approach.

13 JULY 2024 (PERIOD 4) FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT 2024/25

Decision

- (i) That the SLT forecast of the full year's outturn for the Council, made at the end of July 2024 including progress of the transformational and efficiency savings incorporated into the budget, be noted.
- (ii) That the capital programme be noted.

Reason for the decision

The Council provided a mix of statutory and discretionary services to communities across Dorset and was legally required to set a balanced budget every year, and so must deliver services within the resources made available.

14 ADDITIONAL PROCUREMENT FORWARD PLAN REPORT - £500K (2024 - 2025) AND MODERN SLAVERY TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT 2023- 2024

Decision

- (i) Cabinet agreed, to begin each procurement processes listed in Appendix 1 to this report, and
- (ii) That in each instance the further step of making a contract award be delegation to the relevant Cabinet Member, in consultation with the relevant Executive Director.
- (iii) Cabinet agreed, to publish the proposed Modern Slavery Transparency Statement for 2023-2024.

Reason for the decision

Cabinet was required to approve all key decisions with financial consequences of £500k or more. It was good governance to provide Cabinet with a summary of all proposed procurements prior to them formally commencing. It was a requirement for the Council to publish a Modern Slavery Transparency Statement on an annual basis.

15 TOWARDS A NEW MODEL OF DAY OPPORTUNITIES IN DORSET

Decision

- (i) That the recommendation from People and Health Overview Committee of 23 July 2024, for the proposed model for the future commissioning and reshaping of day opportunities provision in Dorset, be agreed.
- (ii) That the model described and the approach to implementation and consultation, be adopted.

Reason for the decision

Day services were a vitally important part of the Dorset support offer for several hundred local residents, providing meaningful activities during the day for those who need support. Our research had shown that people were increasingly wanting flexibility, variety and social connection, which points to a need to modernise the offer around day opportunities. Our commissioning strategies had previously committed the council to this direction of travel, and the additional insight gained from consultation in 2023 had now confirmed and firmed up the next steps.