

Date of committee: 19 November 2024

Date published: 20 November 2024

Date of implementation: 28 November 2024

**DECISIONS OF THE CABINET
19 NOVEMBER 2024**

The following decisions were made by the Cabinet on 19 November 2024 and will come into force and may be implemented on 28 November 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 **27 November 2024.**

The full call-in procedure is set out in the Constitution or for further information and advice please telephone Susan Dallison on 01305 252216

6 SEPTEMBER 2024 (PERIOD 6) FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT 2024/25

- (a) Cabinet notes the Senior Leadership Team's forecast of the full year's outturn for the Council, made at the end of September 2024 including progress of the transformational and efficiency savings incorporated into the budget.
- (b) That the capital programme for 2024/25, be noted.
- (c) That the capital spend of £3.45m against Sewerage Treatment Services Improvement Works as agreed by Capital Strategy & Assets Management Group on 7 October 2024, be noted.
- (d) That the additional capital spend of £2.8m for Weymouth Harbour Walls F&G of which £1.3m to be funded from Dorset Council resources and £1.48m from Harbour reserves, be approved (subject to harbour advisory committee). A detailed breakdown is shown in the appendix which brings total project spend to £13.8m.
- (e) That the additional capital spend of £1.0m for Foster and Kinship Carers Adaptations Capital Fund, be approved.
- (f) To reallocate the budget of £160k from Parkdean improvement works to Greenhill.
- (g) To continue procurement to deliver Urgent and Emergency Care (UEC) Transformation programme – part 2 with an expected value of £9m, of which Dorset Council is committing to up to £1.5m with a further step of making any contract award and finalising the partnership agreement with NHS partners should be delegated to the relevant Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, after consultation with the relevant Executive Director, Jonathan Price, Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Strategy, Cllr Clifford and Executive Director for Corporate Development (s151 officer), Aidan Dunn.

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 through the revenue and capital budgets for 2024/25. This report summarised the Council's forecast financial performance for the year at the end of September 2024.

7 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (MTFP) AND BUDGET STRATEGY

Cabinet: -

- (a) noted the updated cost pressures set out in this paper and the validation work that has been carried out on them.

- (b) agreed the assumptions being used in the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP).
- (c) noted the financial gap arising from (a) and (b) above.
- (d) agreed the 2025/26 principles for budget setting as outlined in section 13 of the report to Cabinet 19 November 2024.
- (e) noted the approach to closing the budget gap set out in this paper of 19 November, recognising that this was work in progress.
- (f) agreed to continue to lobby local MPs and work with peers to press the case for additional, multi-year funding.
- (g) agreed that Cabinet Members work with officers to continue to identify and develop further efficiencies and savings.
- (h) endorsed the next steps and timetable leading up to the 2025/26 budget which would be presented to Full Council on 11 February 2025.

Reason for the decision

Councils were required by law to set an annual budget and for that budget to be 'balanced' or fully funded. Essentially this means that expenditure was balanced by income without unsustainable use of one-off, or short-term sources of finance.

9 OUR FUTURE COUNCIL OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE AND DRAFT TRANSFORMATION PLAN

- (a) That the ambition, approach and scope for the Our Future Council transformation programme be approved, and plans to progress to a full business case, be endorsed. *This would be presented to Joint Overview Committee for feedback and Cabinet for approval in January 2025.*
- (b) That the draft transformation plan, target operating model design, governance plans and draft delivery plans for whole-council transformation, be endorsed (appendix B) *The final versions would be presented Joint Overview Committee for feedback and Cabinet for approval in January 2025.*
- (c) That authority be delegated to Executive Director for Corporate Development to commission strategic advisor, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, (PwC) to the value of £520,000 to deliver a full business case with investment and implementation plans.
- (d) That authority be delegated to Executive Director for Corporate Development, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance & Capital Strategy, to replenish and approve use of the transformation fund allocated from capital and revenue reserves of £3m to be made available to support invest to save transformation activity.

Reason for the decision

Dorset Council was facing significant financial pressures and increasing demand for services, a challenge common to many local authorities. To address this, we must undertake a comprehensive, whole-council transformation to ensure sustainable and effective service delivery.

10 PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING ASSISTANCE POLICY

1. That the Dorset Council Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy be adopted.
2. That authority be delegated to the Corporate Director Housing and Community Safety in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health and Housing to:
 - (a) Make minor amendments to the policy to comply with legislation and guidance.
 - (b) Suspend the approval of any discretionary housing assistance offered in this policy.
 - (c) Introduce new assistance to help private residential property should funding become available.

Reason for the decision

The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 required Councils to publish a policy if they wished to provide assistance in a range of areas related to private sector housing. Dorset Council last approved a Private Sector Housing Assistance policy in November 2020.

11 DORSET COUNCIL CONTAMINATED LAND STRATEGY

That the Dorset Council Contaminated Land Strategy be approved.

Reasons for the decision

The Strategy ensures that the Council continues to meet its land contamination regulatory duties in a manner which was rational, ordered and efficient, and reflective of Dorset's local circumstances.

12 DORSET SACRE COMMON AGREED SYLLABUS

That the Dorset SACRE syllabus be approved to enable teaching and learning from Autumn Term 2025.

Reason for the decision

So the formal agreed Dorset locally Agreed Syllabus can be shared with all our schools and academy settings.

13 DESIGNING OUT SEVERE HARDSHIP AND IMPROVING SOCIAL MOBILITY IN DORSET

That a cross-directorate and multi-agency taskforce be established, with the purpose of improving social mobility, reducing poverty, and ensuring cohesive responses across the Council and with wider partners.

This would: -

- Revisit the recommendations made to the Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee in the paper 'Social Mobility in Dorset', November 2021 and use this to inform the taskforce membership suggested in Appendix two of the report to Cabinet 19 November 2014.
- Define and agree future actions as suggested in Appendix two.
- Develop local data insights and analysis to inform and refine our approaches at both community and authority level.
- Implement relevant recommendations at a local level from the national Social Mobility Commission's annual reports.
- Report progress annually.

Reason for the decision

Working to reduce inequalities was not a one-off piece of work; improving life chances for all was already what we strive to do and was woven throughout our various strategies and long-term plans. This approach brought together all our ambitions to ensure we were moving collectively towards reducing poverty and improving social mobility as business as usual for Dorset Council.

The challenges were complex and could not be held by any one directorate or organisation. These were deep rooted socio-economic structural issues that warrant a considered, coordinated, and long-term response.

14 WEYMOUTH HARBOUR - FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND OPEN PORT DUTY REPORT

- (a) That an application be made to the Marine Management Organisation for a Harbour Revision Order in respect of Weymouth Harbour to restrict the Open Port Duty
- (b) That authority be delegated to the Executive Lead for Place Services, in consultation with the Cabinet member for Place Services, to determine the wording of the Harbour Revision Order based on legal advice and to undertake all procedures for the submission of the Harbour Revision Order to the Marine Management Organisation.
- (c) That a budget of £40,000 be allocated for the work set out in (a) and (b) above from Harbours Reserves.

Reason for the decision

The decision allows Weymouth Harbour to:

- Develop the Peninsula in line with the Harbour Business Plan and the Government funding commitments, which included public space enhancements, commercial developments, and housing.
- Reduce the financial and operational burden imposed by the unrestricted Open Port Duty, which currently required the harbour to accommodate large commercial vessels that were no longer viable or necessary for future growth.
- Secure long-term financial sustainability through commercial opportunities aligned with the Government funding programme.

17 NITROGEN REDUCTION IN POOLE HARBOUR SPD - OUTSTANDING MITIGATION LIABILITY

That the recommendations set out in the exempt report of Cabinet 19 November 2024, be approved

Reason for the decision

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) required the Council to assess the impacts of new development on habitats sites and to only grant planning permission where it had concluded through an appropriate assessment that adverse impacts would be avoided or mitigated.

18 DORSET INNOVATION PARK MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

That the recommendations set out in the exempt report of 19 November 2024, be approved.

Reason for the decision

To decide on the Dorset Innovation Park Management Options

19 COUNTY HALL CO-LOCATION OPPORTUNITY

That Cabinet approves the proposal and authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Place, to complete the necessary legal documents to give effect to the above, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Assets & Property.

Reason for the decision

To decide on co-location opportunities at County Hall.