



People and Health Scrutiny Committee

Date: Thursday, 14 November 2024
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Meeting Room 1, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

Members (Quorum: 3)

Toni Coombs (Chair), Louie O'Leary (Vice-Chair), Laura Beddow, Bridget Bolwell, Sally Holland, Chris Kippax, Robin Legg, Jane Somper, Claudia Webb and Carl Woode

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	
To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2024.	

The draft minutes are to be published ahead of the meeting.

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 Monday, 11 November 2024.

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 Monday, 11 November 2024.

[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. SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 5 - 30

To receive feedback from a People & Health Scrutiny Committee working group on the Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2023-24.

The annual report is attached to this agenda.

8. PRISONER EARLY RELEASE SCHEME 31 - 32

To receive a briefing note from the Corporate Director for Housing and Community Safety.

9. CORPORATE COMPLAINTS TEAM ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24 33 - 78

To consider a report by the Complaints Manager.

10. PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY

A review of the relevant Dorset Council performance dashboard to inform the scrutiny committee's work programme and to identify items for further review.

The following link is the dashboard for the committee:

[People and Health Scrutiny Dashboard](#)

11. COST OF LIVING CHALLENGE UPDATE 79 - 98

To consider a report by the Business Partner – Communities and Partnerships.

12. COMMITTEE'S WORK PROGRAMME AND CABINET'S FORWARD PLAN 99 - 128

To consider the committee's Work Programme and the Executive

Forward Plans.

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.

Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board

Annual Report 2023-2024



The Safeguarding Adults Boards bring together all public, voluntary and community sector agencies across BCP and Dorset with the aim of working together to protect adults at risk from abuse, harm, or neglect. We achieve this through joined up strategic leadership and collective accountability.

Welcome to the Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board 2023/2024 Annual Report. The Board meets jointly with the BCP Safeguarding Adults Board and shares all subgroups of the Board. This enables us to work efficiently with our partners across the NHS and Police, and also with the many other public, voluntary and community sector agencies. A separate Annual Report is provided as we have constitutionally retained separate Boards enabling us to have place-based meetings where required.

The primary role of a safeguarding adults board is to ensure that all public sector agencies work together to ensure that adults with care and support needs in the area are protected from abuse, harm, and neglect; where because of their care and support needs they are unable to protect themselves. The Care Act 2014 sets out that Safeguarding Adults Boards (SABs), should agree a local safeguarding strategic Business Plan and set out in the Annual Report how it has delivered that plan. The Board must also commission a Safeguarding Adults Review, (S44 of the Care Act) when an adult in its area dies as a result of abuse or neglect, whether known or suspected, and there is concern that partner agencies could have worked more effectively to protect the adult. Safeguarding Adults Boards must also arrange a Safeguarding Adults Review if an adult in its area has not died, but the Safeguarding Adult Board knows or suspects that the adult has experienced serious abuse or neglect. and must ensure that partners demonstrate how they work together so that lessons learned impact the future delivery of services to those with care and support needs.

In 2023 the Dorset SAB published SAR Simon – with recommendations of national significance regarding the transfer of GP records between different countries and counties within the UK. We also concluded SAR Elizabeth, and it was agreed that this would not be published. Summaries from these reports are included in this annual report.

During this year, the Board continued to hold alternate Board meetings in-person and held several events:

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- In May 2023 productive meetings were held in respect of the LGA Adult Social Care Peer Review. This was commissioned by Adult Social Care in Dorset to ensure support in identifying any issues in preparation for forthcoming CQC assessment of adult social care. The Board participated in the review and the outcome was helpful in providing assurance about the effectiveness of safeguarding delivery by adult social care and assurance for the Board about the partnership working to deliver effective services to protect those with care and support needs.
 - I attended NHS England regional Mental Health Homicide Review Workshop as it is essential that in commissioning any reviews, we work effectively with partners to ensure that the learning is delivered by the most appropriate organisation.
 - This SAB has been proud to include representatives from Housing on our Board for a number of years. In July 2023 we hosted an event for registered housing providers attended by colleagues from the local authority, adult social care safeguarding, and learning & development teams as well, importantly, as many registered social housing providers. Attendees formed a Housing & Safeguarding Reference group enabling them to have a forum to share ideas & experiences. A second event was held in January 2024 for all pan-Dorset Registered Housing Providers with Professor Michael Preston-Shoot presenting on the theme of Adult Safeguarding & Homelessness. The event focussed on the need to identify and use evidence-based practice, ensuring that everyone works across agencies and thinks ‘team around the person’. Rachel Young (Pause Dorset) spoke about the housing issues for working with women whose children are removed. Regular engagement with housing has been welcomed and this network is proactively sharing learning. The SAB has now agreed to facilitate an annual event.
 - In July 2023, the first face-to-face CEG meeting was held, providing networking opportunities to improve understanding of the important roles which the voluntary and community sector hold in promoting awareness of safeguarding. Effective engagement with and between community groups enabled participants to showcase their work, forging strong working relationships, understanding each other’s remit.
 - We delivered training during the year on the role of the Safeguarding Adults Board, for 200 Dorset staff.

In September 2023 I undertook prison visits to HMP Portland and HMP The Verne, accompanied by the Dorset Council Adult Safeguarding Lead/Service Manager - S117 Hub. HM Prison & Probation Services are represented on the Board and there is much to do to ensure that the Board has assurance that the Care Act responsibilities for prisoners with care and support needs are delivered. This is the responsibility of the local authority which commissions support from healthcare providers based in prisons. Given the numbers of those in prison with mental health needs and the high proportion of prisoners who are neurodivergent; we also commenced work to ensure that preparation for release takes account of the services which will need to be available. This supports individuals and importantly is a matter for public protection.

Our subgroups have seen some changes in chairing arrangements due to changes in personnel but by the end of this reporting year a degree of stability has been achieved. This year saw the establishment of an additional subgroup of the Board - the Mental Capacity Act & Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (MCA/DoLS) Subgroup (referred to later in this report) – important for the Board’s assurance, this will help address the fact that issues regarding mental capacity assessments and executive function are recurring themes in very many safeguarding interventions and reviews.

I established a quarterly meeting for the Chairs of the Board’s subgroup chairs in September 2023 to ensure that partnership working improved. We are now seeing how the outcomes and learning from safeguarding adult reviews are also reflected in the audit plans for the Quality Assurance subgroup. There is also an improved understanding of the importance of engagements with colleagues in the voluntary and community sector across all groups

Productive working continues between the Board and NHS Dorset and during the year I met regularly with the NHS Dorset Safeguarding Leads including discussion about the pilot CQC Inspection of the Integrated Care System, progress on SARs across the NHS system and revised Pressure Ulcer Guidance.

During the year we updated policies and procedures - including our Board Constitution, Communication Strategy, and Document Retention Policy. Regular review ensures good governance and clarity of understanding across the partnership.

February 2024 saw improved capacity within the Board’s business team with recruitment of a Project Officer to enable focus on key tasks including delivery of more effective communications and delivery of a new website which will be act as a reference point for safeguarding practitioners as well as providing accessible information for the public.

At the close of the year, we facilitated a Board development event in March 2024, which gave us the opportunity to review and update our 3-year strategy and all partners made a commitment to engage in ‘horizon scanning’ during the year ahead.

I would like to thank all those who have contributed to safeguarding adults, with dedication, hard work and strong leadership from across our partnership. In particular I would like to thank our Boards’ Business Team, who have each contributed significantly to delivery of our work.



Siân Walker-McAllister, Independent Chair

Safeguarding Adults

Safeguarding adults is about protecting the rights of people with care and support needs to live in safety, free from abuse, harm and neglect.

If you are concerned about a person who is over the age of 18 years, who has care and support needs, and you feel they are being abused or at risk of abuse from another person, you should seek help for them.

To report a safeguarding concern in the Dorset Council area contact:

01305 221016

During evenings and weekends, telephone 01305 858250

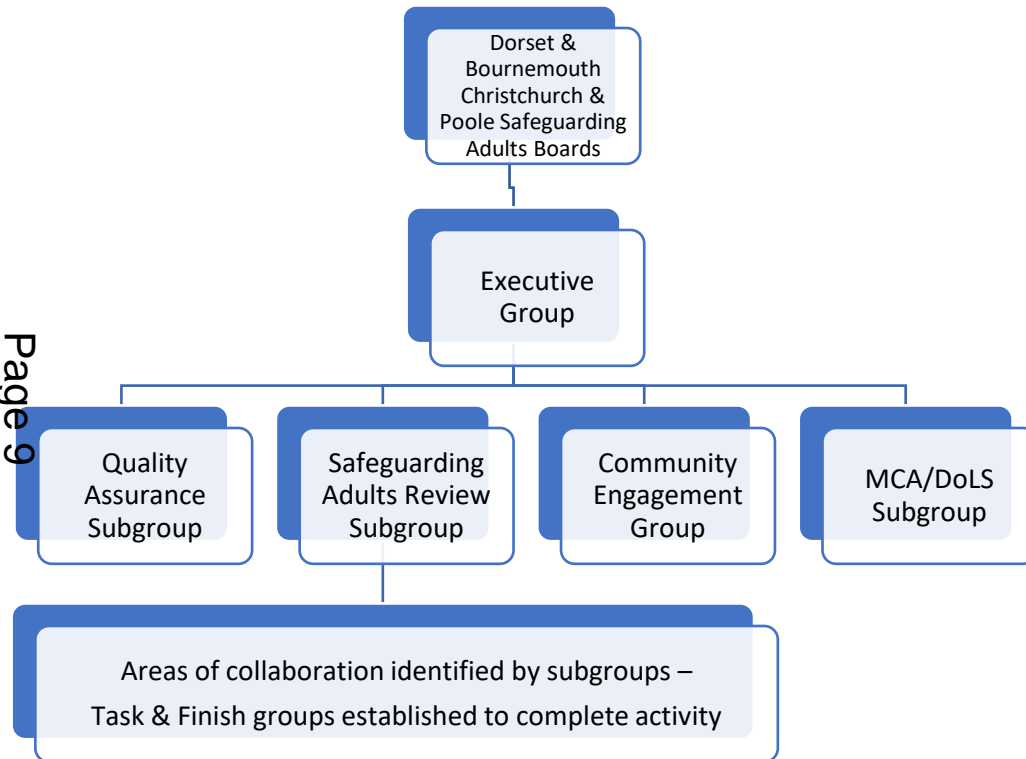


In an emergency dial 999. If the person is not in danger now, dial 101.

If you are not sure what to do, or need some advice, there are people who can help. You can talk to your GP or nurse, a social worker, a police officer or your key worker. They will help you to respond to the concerns.

Structure of the Dorset & BCP Safeguarding Adults Boards

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Dorset & BCP Safeguarding Adults Boards Budget 2023-2024



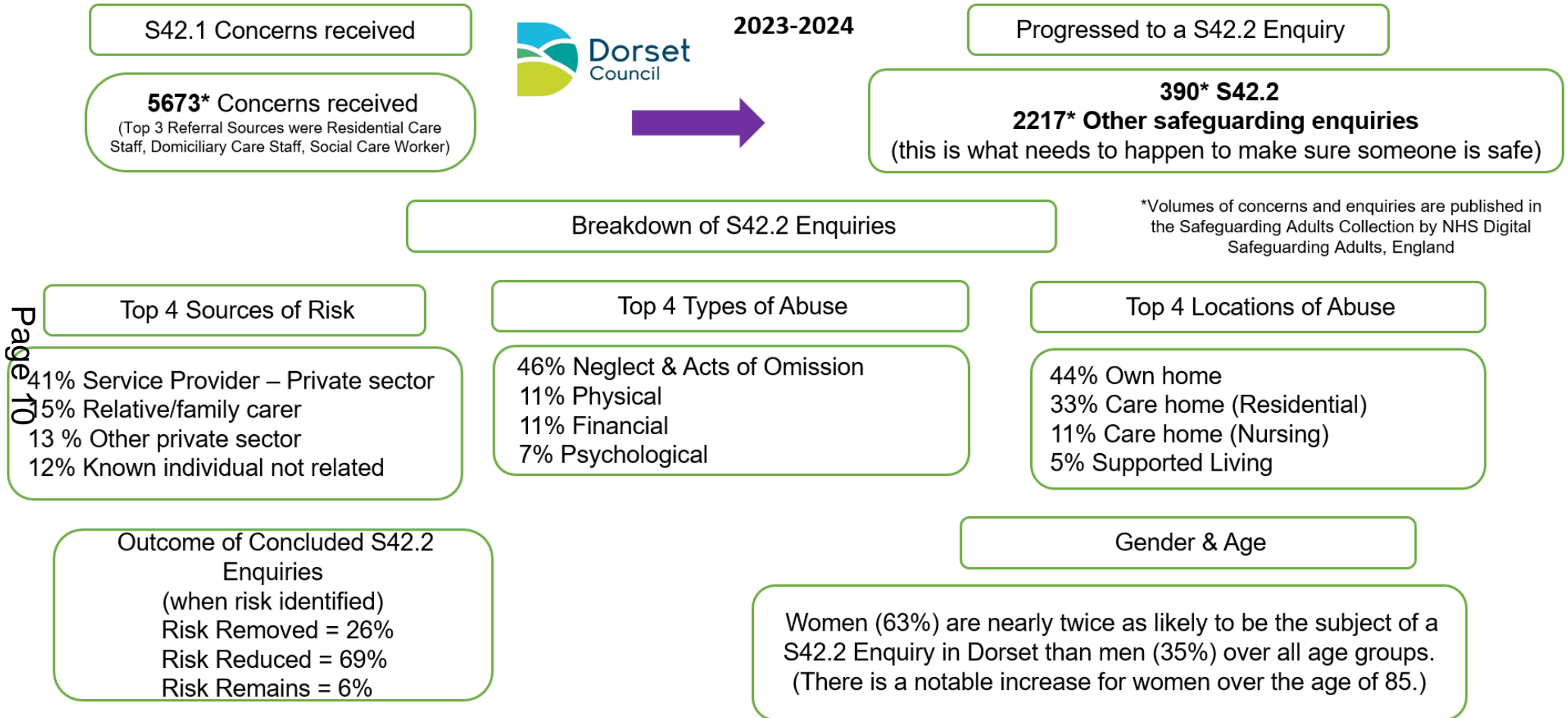
The Dorset & BCP SABs maintain a working budget to enable them to undertake their work and the priorities identified in the business plan. Each year, contributions are received from statutory partners to support this work. During 2022-2023 the two Boards merged the Business Units and subsequently the budgets.

During much of 2023-2024, the Business team was carrying a vacancy for a Project Officer and a part time Administrator resulting in an underspend on staffing. During this year the SABs held 5 in-person events, so cost for venue hire had increased since the previous year.

The Dorset and BCP SABs are grateful for the financial support of our partners which enables us to carry out our work.

BCP Council	£70,000
Dorset Council	£70,000
NHS Dorset	£38,745
Dorset Police	£19,404
Total	£198,149

Dorset Council - Safeguarding Activity & Performance Information 2023-24



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*Volumes of concerns and enquiries as published in the Safeguarding Adults Collection by NHS Digital [NHS England Digital - Safeguarding Adults, England, 2023-24](https://www.nhs.uk/what-we-do/our-services/safeguarding-adults/)

Strategic Plan for 2023-2026

The Dorset and BCP Boards strategic aim is to ensure adults are safeguarded by empowering and supporting them to make informed choices and decisions (Making Safeguarding Personal).

Preventative work in safeguarding	Seeking assurance on safeguarding practices	Assurance on delivery of 'Making Safeguarding Personal' (MSP).
<p>Prevention Aim: Continued development with partners of preventative work in safeguarding.</p>	<p>Accountability Aim: Continuing to seek assurance on safeguarding practice across system partners.</p>	<p>Partnership working Aim: Assurance on delivery of 'MSP' using a whole family approach.</p>
<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review learning from SARs from DBCPSAB & other Boards and revisit thematic learning from reviews to inform preventative work with adults with care and support needs. • Ensure we always take account of the experiences of people who use services or receive safeguarding interventions. • Seek assurance on an annual basis from partners that learning is embedded in the work of all frontline staff in all services in line with our Training & Development strategy. • Ensure that the Boards' subgroups are able to provide evidence of system learning and working to deliver preventative work. • Ensure there is good multi-agency working with a contextual safeguarding approach to preventative work with people who are homeless. • Improve use of data from all partners to enable us to identify trends which influence preventative work across all agencies. 	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuously develop how we receive assurance as governance frameworks evolve across every statutory partner. • Ensure data is understood/ used to identify themes for every partner to progress in their safeguarding work; that information and learning is shared across the system. • Work in partnership across the safeguarding children and community safety partnerships to ensure that complexities of 'Transitional Safeguarding' are understood well. • Seek assurance on delivery of safe and person-centred practice in private mental health hospitals and for all placements of people outside our area. • Seek assurance that 'Think Family' practice across all agencies is embedded. • Continue to seek assurance on health & social care practice and provider care quality. • Seek assurance that the system is working to safeguard people via the new national policing initiative, 'Right Person, Right Care' 	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek assurance from all partners that Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) is embedded throughout all agencies' safeguarding work. Seeking evidence that people have opportunity to express their outcomes at every stage in their safeguarding journey. • Involve people in the work we do – review how we communicate more widely with people and listen to and act upon the voices of those who have experienced safeguarding interventions. • Deliver our communication/ engagement strategy to the widest audience with the support of the voluntary and community sector through our Community Engagement Subgroup. • Ensure that the Quality Assurance subgroup continues to audit application of MSP and provides data which evidences that application of MSP is embedded.

What we achieved in 2023-2024

In our strategy we said...	This is what we did
<p>Continued development with partners of preventative work in safeguarding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued working with Partners and received updates from Dorset Police on ‘Right Care Right Person’ approach for working with vulnerable people • Ongoing work with the Community Engagement Group (CEG) to facilitate shared learning and awareness of safeguarding • Good partnership working with NHS Dorset and production of a revised local Pressure Ulcer Guidance, this was added to the Safeguarding Adults Procedures • Delivered and published Three ‘7 Minute Learning’ reviews on ‘Multi-Agency Risk Management (MARM) processes’, ‘Safeguarding and Hospital Discharge’ and ‘Learning from BCP SAR Aziza’ • Delivered with partners, 4 x bite-sized videos, published on the Boards’ websites, providing an overview of the MARM process • Revised and updated the Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) Referral form ensuring clarity and understanding about SAR referrals by agencies, enabling better-informed decisions as to whether the criteria is met for commissioning a SAR • A Transitional Safeguarding Position Statement was published, written to ensure that agencies understand the needs of young people who are moving from Children’s services and need support from Adult Social Care and other services • Established the Housing & Safeguarding Reference group and arranged delivery of learning about ‘Adult Safeguarding and Homelessness’
<p>Continuing to seek assurance on safeguarding practice across system partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivered Safeguarding Adult Reviews on Simon and Elizabeth, continuing to seek assurance through implementation of action plans • Produced and published the Dorset & BCP SAB Communication Strategy • The QA and CEG subgroup Terms of Reference were updated • Subgroup Chairs and Deputies met quarterly to share practice and work together more effectively.
<p>Assurance on delivery of ‘Making Safeguarding Personal’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) was a key feature of the Boards’ Development session in March 2024, with workshops on this theme and discussions around why it is important for all partners to embed this into practice • The focus on application of MSP is always included within terms of reference for safeguarding adult reviews and thus is reflected in recommendations • QA subgroup will be undertaking an audit and review of MSP again in the next year to ensure it is embedded into practice.

Reports from the Chairs of the Subgroups for 2023-2024

<p>Community Engagement Subgroup (CEG)</p>	<p>CEG has continued to welcome an increased membership and more consistent attendance at meetings and events, contributing to the strategic plan. It is Chaired and Vice-Chaired by two Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) representatives from BCP and Dorset Council areas, bringing together a wide range of skills and knowledge of the wider sector in Dorset.</p> <p>The CEG is working towards achieving the priorities outlined in the Safeguarding Adult Boards' 2021/24 Strategic Plan and continues to have a focus on informed and preventative work with safeguarding. This involves talking to various groups about how to ensure that people with care and support needs are kept safe. CEG has received presentations from Prama Care, People First Dorset and the Safeguarding Board business managers, looking at various themes such as hoarding, self-neglect and 7-minute learning reviews to help organisations and volunteers understand how they can support someone where there may be a safeguarding concern.</p> <p>CEG Refreshes and reviews good safeguarding practices within the VCS and shares these findings and learning across the sector.</p> <p>CEG has worked with the subgroups and the board to ensure that the VCS is recognised as often being the first point of contact for Dorset residents and that the sector often initiates reporting a concern when supporting adults in the community.</p>
<p>Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) Subgroup</p>	<p>The Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) subgroup met on 7 occasions throughout 2023/2024. Until December 2023, the chair was Sarah Webb from BCP Council. From January 2024 a new chair, Kirsten Bland from NHS Dorset was appointed.</p> <p>During 2023/2024 the SAR subgroup facilitated the publication of a safeguarding adult review - SAR Simon, available from the Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board website Safeguarding adults review - Learning from the circumstances around the death of Simon (dorsetcouncil.gov.uk). SAR Elizabeth was also approved by the Board.</p> <p>The subgroup has considered 8 referrals for a SAR over the last year and four of these met the criteria for commissioning a SAR.</p>
<p>Quality Assurance (QA) Subgroup</p>	<p>The Quality Assurance (QA) Subgroup met on 4 occasions throughout 2023/2024. Initially, the subgroup was co-chaired by Jonathan Price (Dorset Council) and Liz Plastow (NHS Dorset). In May 2023 Simon Hester was appointed to co-chair after Liz Plastow left NHS Dorset. Tanya Dawson-Sheehan (Dorset Council) has chaired the subgroup, with Simon Hester as Deputy Chair since November 2023</p> <p>The subgroup has welcomed updates and demonstrations of the 'Dorset Insight and Intelligence Service' (DiiS) Safeguarding Dashboard, commissioned by NHS Dorset but not intended for use only within the NHS. Discussions as to how partner agencies can be involved and use this new database are ongoing.</p> <p>During the year the group discussed the case recording systems of partner organisations, as detailed recording enables more accurate records. In Section 42 Enquiries more than one abuse type can be recorded enabling more detailed analysis. Analysis of volumes of concerns received provided assurance to the SABs regarding the terminology used in both LA areas.</p>

	<p>Throughout the year the subgroup has undertaken a progressive audit concentrating on Self-Neglect. The most frequent abuse type in both LA areas (and nationwide) is Neglect and Acts of Omission. In November findings from the qualitative audit on Self-Neglect were presented from a variety of subgroup member organisations and others including the Fire & Rescue Service and voluntary and community sector. This provided rich information on what is going well and what improvements could be made; and identified common themes on 'wish lists' which will be examined further.</p> <p>The subgroup identified that the volume of advocacy referrals was lower than expected and will continue to examine the underlying reasons in the next reporting year.</p> <p>The QA Workplan was reviewed and updated with all tasks identified in the SAB strategic plan enabling the subgroup to track and plan our work and where required collaborate with other subgroups.</p> <p>Audit work undertaken by the QA Subgroup in previous years identified the need for greater understanding of the MARM process and promotion of the fact that any agency can convene a MARM meeting. Further progress on training materials for staff was made during this reporting year.</p>
<p>MCA/DoLS Subgroup</p> <p>Page 14</p>	<p>During this reporting year a new subgroup of the Boards was created in response to ongoing strategic discussions about the Mental Capacity Act (MCA), Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and the proposed forthcoming change of law to deliver Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) which will be introduced by the Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019.</p> <p>In April 2023 the Department of Health and Social Care announced that implementation of LPS would be delayed “beyond the life of this Parliament”. Board partner organisations had been planning for some time in order to prepare practitioners for the changes in legislation and how these would impact on practice.</p> <p>In December 2023 the Board discussed a review of the governance of MCA / DoLS and unanimously agreed a proposal to convene a Mental Capacity Act Subgroup of the Board to provide consistent governance framework for all partners. Draft Terms of Reference were available at this meeting with some amendments approved at the March 2024 meeting. Betty Butlin from BCP Council Adult Social care was appointed the Subgroup Chair and the first meeting will take place in Q1 of the next reporting year.</p>

Two Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) were approved by the Board in 2023-2024

SAR Simon - Simon, a white British man was aged 71 when he died, experienced mental ill health throughout his adult life, and on several occasions received inpatient hospital treatment to help him become mentally well again. He gained great insight into his own mental health and became 'an expert by experience', using his experience to mentor and advise others.

After a long period of being well Simon moved from Dorset to Scotland to pursue his love of art by taking a foundation course. In Scotland he received treatment for physical illness that for various reasons impacted his mental health, to the extent that he was detained and admitted to a psychiatric hospital for over a year. During this time the Covid-19 pandemic began, and Simon could not see his family for 9 months. Together they decided he would return to Dorset to be closer to them. The authorities in the Western Isles made no formal arrangements regarding Simon's move so his family were left to manage this alone, and unfortunately the restrictions in place at the time meant that when Simon did arrive at the care home in Dorset, he could not see family immediately.

Agencies involved with Simon - Dorset Council and NHS primary and secondary health services, had no information about him, and the care home had minimal information. For the first three weeks following Simon's move back to Dorset, he was left without support for his complex needs due to the need to isolate (Covid guidance) and the lack of information shared. The organisations working with Simon subsequently struggled to support him.

Although the care home was deemed a 'place of safety', Simon's perception was different, and he did not feel safe. Despite the failure of a plan of least restriction being put in place after a Mental Health Act (MHA) assessment there was no contingency plan about re-assessment of Simon's mental health and no planning or resource to provide him with the 'wrap around' care that may have helped him to feel safe in the care home. Practitioners did their best to find and share information, but there was no multi-agency meeting involving all who knew Simon or could offer guidance on working with him. His supportive family was not involved in his care by the community mental health team. Simon died by suicide six weeks after arriving in Dorset, he left notes explaining his fears about his fate in the care home.

Learning from the review has highlighted the need for:

- Careful Planning for transitions between areas together with reciprocal communication
- Strengths-based approaches to practise – Agencies should always consider who is available to support the person?
- Person-centred approaches – Agencies should always aim to understand the person and what lies behind the decisions they make.
- Making contingency plans - *Shared contingency plans to support a person who is mentally unwell, but not detainable under the Mental Health Act (MHA) 1983, should stipulate under what circumstances a further assessment under the MHA should be considered and who is responsible for initiating it. Family and friends can be an important source of information to support contingency plans, their input should be sought as a priority.*
- Effective Multi-agency working

One of the findings from the review of national importance is that there appears to be no system for transfer of electronic records between GPs in different UK countries. The SAB has escalated this issue via the regional and national SAB Chairs Networks and is awaiting a response from DHSC.

Link to the report: [Safeguarding Adults Review - Learning from the circumstances around the death of Simon](#)

SAR Elizabeth - During 2023-24, the SAB completed a SAR relating to a woman in her 40s who was found deceased. She had longstanding mental health problems and alcohol dependency related to trauma experienced as a young adult. Later, her life had become more settled as a result of parenthood and abstinence from alcohol. At the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, however, she experienced a sequence of distressing events, including flashbacks to past traumatic events, which resulted in multiple crises of acute distress and, on occasion, a return to alcohol. Multiple agencies were involved in supporting her.

During this period, she arranged for her child to be cared for by a family member, a placement that was later secured through child safeguarding action.

Learning from the review has resulted in a series of recommendations for improvements in the following aspects of safeguarding practice across the partnership. These are:

- trauma-informed practice.
- collaborative care models uniting mental health, primary care and substance use services
- recognition of adjustments necessitated by Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- improved pathways for interagency information-sharing
- better use of interagency decision-making forums such as Multiagency Risk Management meetings
- clarification of distinctions between safeguarding, MARM and agencies' own risk management pathways
- improved understanding and use of the Mental Capacity Act 2005
- improvement in whole-family approaches where the needs of both children and adults are being met
- improvements to children's social care practice in kinship placements and support for parents in distress
- amendments to inaccurate information recorded in agency records
- learning events to disseminate learning and to review outcomes of action on improvement priorities.

The Dorset and BCP Safeguarding Adults Boards are made up of senior representatives from the following agencies:

Our Statutory Partners



Local Authority representatives from Dorset and BCP Councils include senior officers from Adult Social Care and Housing as well as Cabinet Members for Adult Social Care.

Our Board Member Organisations



HMP Guys Marsh
HMP Portland
HMP The Verne



Board Members' Reports 2023-2024

Dorset Council

Achievements during 2023-2024

Dorset Council continues to ensure that Making Safeguarding Personal principles are fully embedded and captured throughout all safeguarding enquiries. During 2023-24 this has included a key system change to enable individuals' views to be evidenced at the start of their safeguarding journey, ensuring their voice is consistently heard and recorded clearly.

A specific focus has been given to 'Transitional Safeguarding' with the establishment of a Task & Finish group co-chaired by Adults and Children's services. This has enabled consideration to how young adults who have experienced harm and trauma as a child can be effectively supported into adulthood to remain safe. A transitional safeguarding pathway is in development.

We continue to engage with our local communities to raise awareness of adult safeguarding and how to seek support where there are concerns that an adult with care and support needs is at risk of or is experiencing abuse and neglect. This has included the delivery of 2 community events. One in partnership with Dorset Community Action Network to engage with voluntary and community partners in the Weymouth, Portland and Dorchester area. A further event was delivered to Weldmar Trustees and Members.

Training & Development

- 17 Essential Adult Safeguarding Skills Courses delivered throughout year to **255** attendees.
- 5 Mandatory Adult Safeguarding Annual Updates delivered to **247** staff, providing a focus to local safeguarding practice, learning from SARs, whole family approaches and transitional safeguarding developments.
- Housing Options Team improved its staff induction, to embed safeguarding ensuring all staff undertake safeguarding e-learning and 'Essential Safeguarding Skills' 1-day course, as well as the mandatory annual safeguarding updates. Safeguarding has also been added as a standalone discussion on all caseworker's 121s to ensure that it is at the forefront of the work that officers undertake.
- Adult safeguarding quarterly webinars delivered to partners across the Pan Dorset region focussing on Cyber Influence and social media; the impact of Incels; Lasting Power of Attorneys (delivered by Office of the Public Guardian); Understanding Domestic Homicide Reviews and the launch of the Dorset Council, Missing Persons Protocol (developed in partnership with Dorset Police). A total of **467** colleagues have attended these webinars. A further session was also provided by REACH Drug and Alcohol Services to provide updates on the support they provide.
- During National Safeguarding Adults Week (in November 2023) further webinars, delivered by Bournemouth University included positive stories from social work practice and Child & Adolescent to parent violence and abuse. A wellbeing session was also provided focusing on the importance of staff looking after themselves, in order to better look out for others.
- This year's 15th Mental Capacity Act Conference – 'Power, Choice and Control' was attended by over 300 delegates. Alex Ruck Keene KC (Hon) delivered a session entitled 'Grappling with Deprivation of Liberty' with other sessions focusing on self-neglect, coercive control and Consent & Capacity.

Within the Dorset Mental Capacity Act Team there has been a 68% increase in granted Deprivation of Liberty authorisations during 2023-2024. This is positive as this ensures that vulnerable individuals are getting access to a right of appeal to challenge their deprivations.

Established mechanisms are in place between the Safeguarding service and Quality Improvement Team to work preventatively with providers promoting early intervention, sharing of concerns and to offer support to ensure services are of the expected standard.

What have the challenges been?

We have seen a further increase in the number of adult safeguarding concerns, received with an average of 120-150 each week, compared with an average 101 per week in 2022-23. Ensuring these are risk screened and responded to in a timely manner remains a priority. Undertaking proactive preventative work is key to supporting a reduction in safeguarding concerns.

We continue to strive towards improving our understanding of self-neglect to ensure that each person receives the right support from partners across the system. We have reviewed our current safeguarding team resources and established an Adult Safeguarding Self Neglect Practitioner to provide expertise and develop wider knowledge in this area.

As part of developing better relationships between colleagues in Housing and Adult Social Care we undertook a workshop to discuss the obstacles and challenges both teams face. From those discussions, ASC and Housing have agreed to jointly fund a pilot post to lead on bridging both services and attend appropriate hospital discharge meetings to ensure no delayed discharges and. This replicates the partnership working we already have in place with a similar role with Children's Services and will improve outcomes for those people currently receiving Adult Social Care interventions.

Future organisational plans to continue work on SAB Strategic Plan priorities

- With completion of the Transitional Safeguarding Pathway, we will work closely with Children's Services to launch and embed the approach across Dorset. We will promote our approach locally and nationally to inform good practice and joined up working across the system. This will further embed a 'whole family' approach to practice across the Council and support the work of the newly launched 'Birth to Settled Adulthood' Team.
- Preventative and community engagement events will continue throughout 2024-2025 with 2 new events being planned for the East and North of Dorset.
- We will be launching quarterly Social Care Provider safeguarding webinars in June 2024 with our Quality Assurance colleagues to further embed and develop understanding and knowledge across providers. The first, co-delivered with Dorset Police will focus on Dorset Council's Missing Person Protocol and the Police 'Herbert' Protocol. We will be launching new feedback opportunities for individuals and providers to enable their experiences and views to inform service development.
- A review of the Safeguarding Service model will take place in 2024-2025 to ensure a fluid and flexible service can be offered to all residents across Dorset who have care and support needs.
- We will continue to work closely with Integrated Care Board (ICB) colleagues and other partners to further nurture a county-wide approach to the prevention of abuse and neglect. This will incorporate our commissioning strategies and a review of the Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy to consider progress

in key areas such as enhanced housing support and hospital settings to reduce discharge delays and the impact on patient recovery due to homelessness or unmet housing need.

Dorset Police

Achievements during 2023-2024

- The Safeguarding Hubs within each of the two Local Policing Areas (LPA's) are now well embedded, allowing strong partnerships to be developed with the Local Authority teams.
- We have seen examples of excellent cross-agency working in both local authority areas in response to potential adults at risk concerns, including modern slavery and vulnerable adults.

What have the challenges been?

- Demand for specialist resources remains strong against a limited capacity.
- The Safeguarding Hubs have seen a high turnover of resources, often as a result of internal staff promotions and other issues, which can mean having to re-train new staff and losing experience.

The understanding of data could be improved. There are difficulties in extracting data which could assist in the identification of trends and issues which may allow earlier interventions.

Future organisational plans to continue work on SAB Strategic Plan priorities

- Dorset Police will continue to deliver 'Vulnerability' training every year for our frontline staff. This will include a focus on being trauma informed.
- Dorset Police is in the process of developing a new 'Vulnerability Strategy' and governance arrangements. It will use the findings of a recent review by the 'Vulnerability Knowledge Practice Programme' (VKPP).

Dorset Police now has a Multi-Agency Risk Management (MARM) co-ordinator role within the Safeguarding Hub and has developed a governance structure to support the partnership approach and adhere to principles and guidelines. This includes robust triage management, a process to streamline practice and meaningful supervisory oversight. This ensures a whole system approach to understand and manage risk.

NHS Dorset

Achievements during 2023-2024

Continued development with partners of preventative work in safeguarding.

During 2023/24, NHS Dorset worked with NHS provider partners across Dorset and BCP to provide local guidance for the management of pressure ulcers through the policies and procedures published by the SAB.

Continuing to seek assurance on safeguarding practice across system partners.

NHS Dorset helped led the quality assurance sub-group of the SAB during 2023/24. A highlight of this work during the year was a focus on improving safeguarding practice in self-neglect across system partners. NHS Dorset arranged for the development of a self-neglect dashboard by the 'Dorset Insights and Intelligence Service' (DiiS) to aid this work. The dashboard identifies risk factors for self-neglect in the populations of BCP and Dorset to inform the Boards' strategy.

Assurance on delivery of 'Making Safeguarding Personal.'

Safeguarding clinical leads from NHS Dorset undertook safeguarding insight visits during the year to acute and mental health settings and GP practices to meet frontline healthcare practitioners. These visits provided an opportunity to triangulate the assurances provided by commissioned NHS providers about their approach to MSP.

What have the challenges been?

There remain opportunities to improve the volume and quality of partnership data about safeguarding practice available to the NHS Dorset safeguarding leads. A new safeguarding insights and intelligence group was set up and facilitated by colleagues in the DiiS during the year. This has provided a forum for partners to discuss ways to improve the interconnection and flow of partnership data.

Future organisational plans to continue work on SAB Strategic Plan priorities

Whilst commissioning large-scale NHS healthcare services from NHS providers across BCP and Dorset, NHS Dorset also directly employs a small workforce of frontline staff who work with adults with needs for care and support and their families. The NHS Dorset safeguarding clinical leads will continue to provide training and supervision to these frontline staff. During 2024/25 the leads will focus on improving knowledge about strategies for working alongside people who self-neglect and embedding the principles of trauma-informed care into practice in the context of MSP.

Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust (DHC)

Achievements during 2023-2024

'Safeguarding adults' remains a priority in service delivery and patient safety across all service areas - mental health, learning disability and community physical health services. DHC has:

- Introduced 'DASH RIC' (Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment, Risk - Indicator Checklist') and 'Coercive and Controlling Behaviour' training as a response to learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews.
- Established 'Sexual Safety' task and Finish Group to improve sexual safety on inpatient mental health wards as a response to NHSE national quality improvement plan.

- Undertaken audits and developed plans to improve practice across all inpatient settings around 'Making Safeguarding Personal' including the use of the Mental capacity Act 2005.

What have the challenges been?

- Supporting staff to complete safeguarding training remains a priority but can be challenging when where there are vacancies or workload pressures.
- Measuring the impact of learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews on frontline practice. The embedding of the Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF) will support this going forwards.

Future organisational plans to continue work on SAB Strategic Plan priorities

Some of DHC objectives over the next year include a focus on:

- Homelessness (ensure preventative multi-agency working using a contextual approach to support people).
- Domestic Abuse (improve understanding of DA and coercive and controlling behaviours).
- Focus on Preventative safeguarding work - ensuring the principles of 'Making Safeguarding Personal' are applied in practice and continue to embed 'Think Family' into practice. This Includes knowledge and practice using the Mental capacity Act 2005.

DHC will also focus on

- improving partnership working under Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements; transitional safeguarding and improving data collection and analysis of safeguarding activity within DHC.
- continue to provide quality assurance to the SAB that safeguarding priorities are in line with best practice and evidence positive outcomes for families. We will monitor our objectives to ensure they are delivered in line with the Board strategic plans through the Trust's bimonthly Safeguarding Group and the Trust's Quality Governance Group.

Dorset County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Achievements during 2023-2024

- Dorset County Hospital (DCH) throughout 2023-2024 has proactively contributed to all Safeguarding Adults Board meetings and subgroups. DCH has actively contributed to Safeguarding Adults Reviews, actioned learning and reviewed its implementation through internal audit.
- To support the delivery of the safeguarding agenda within DCH, there is a clear governance framework in place. The framework provides assurance to our commissioners & to the Safeguarding Adults Board that safeguarding is a priority throughout the healthcare system.
- Safeguarding sits within the portfolio of Director of Nursing & Quality and forms part of the Quality Strategy. There are established links from the frontline to the Trust Board of Directors with clear reporting mechanisms in place via structured internal governance committees.
- There is bespoke training for staff, supplementary to the mandatory safeguarding training, with a focus on the principle of 'Making safeguarding Personal'

(MSP) in combination with the application of the Mental Capacity Act to safeguard patients. Inclusion of the `think family` approach is adopted throughout training and advice. The Safeguarding Team offers advice and encouragement to DCH staff to have conversations with the patients/ service users, giving them the opportunity to voice their wishes, needs and outcomes, therefore reflecting the safeguarding personal agenda.

What have the challenges been?

DCH and the whole of the NHS has seen numerous challenges: staff shortages and retention, industrial action, waiting list backlog impacting on patients, financial issues, health care inequalities, social care budgetary limitations, lack of housing for patients and staff & evolving healthcare needs of an ageing population.

Future organisational plans to continue work on SAB Strategic Plan priorities

DCH has undertaken a staffing review and successfully recruited into three new roles within the safeguarding team which will offer the opportunity for qualitative project work to be undertaken, alongside operational demands. DCH has collaborated in several case management processes for Children & Young people (CYP) transitioning through to Dorset Council's adult services. DCH has recruited a Complex Care Coordinator for CYP 0-25 who will work in conjunction with the safeguarding team to provide visible, credible professional clinical leadership, supporting the clinical management of CYP up to the age of 25yrs, with complex needs including social, emotional, and mental health needs

University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust (UHD)

Achievements during 2023 – 2024

- Strengthened the learning difficulties portfolio to include neurodiversity.
- Continue to support the wider system safeguarding agenda, working collaboratively with safeguarding partners in health, social care, and police.
- Continued to embed the 'Think Family' approach across UHD.
- Engaged in partnership working on the policing 'Right Person Right Care' model.
- Involved families in direct 'lived experience' training stories to improve care.
- Strengthening 'Making Safeguarding Personal' in training and updating our Cause for Concern form, post local audit.
- Achieved the Key Performance indicator for safeguarding adult level 1 and 2 training at 90%, and launched level 3 Adult training, ensuring staff are well informed on safeguarding practices.
- Recruitment of a perinatal mental health practitioner.

What have the challenges been?

- The Trust has been challenged with managing the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) / Deprivation of Liberties Safeguards (DoLS) interface for patients who are medically fit but detained in the hospital for their own safety. These processes are externally managed making the application of the correct framework difficult. Partnership working to resolve this issue has begun.

- The rise in patients presenting with challenging behaviours has continued, resulting in high-cost agency nurse spend to support safe care delivery. A partnership project with Dorset Health Care NHS Foundation Trust, has begun to look at models of care.
- The management of long length of stay 'no criteria to reside' patients awaiting specialist health or social care placement.

Future organisational plans to continue work on SAB Strategic Plan priorities

The key focus of the safeguarding teams at UHD will continue to be ensuring that all our staff continue to safeguard people. We will achieve this through on-going training, education and feedback to teams aligned with partnership working to meet the systems strategic plan and objectives. Key programmes of work this year include:

- Models of care for mental health patients in the acute physical health setting.
- Furthering understanding around neurodiversity in care.
- Refining of referral pathways from UHD to ensure the person's voice is heard and they receive the best fit signposting and offers of support.
- Trust Board assurance on safeguarding practices will continue through internal governance.

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service (DWFRS)

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service

Achievements during 2023-2024

We are an active member of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Safeguarding Workstream and work for this year has included: the launch of four new guidance documents:

- safeguarding children and adult's competency framework
- managing allegations
- positive disclosure guidance
- guidance on DBS checks for specific FRS roles following the inclusion of fire and rescue authority employees in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (Exceptions) Order 1975;

We participate in the NFCC workstream on hoarding and mental health awareness. We ensure that all training for staff is aligned to the principles of 'Making Safeguarding Personal'. We continually exceed our training targets across all levels and referrals continue to increase each quarter which evidences that training and campaigns are effective in embedding safeguarding into the organisation. Following an increase in incidents associated with mental health, we have updated our recording systems so we can collate accurate data on incidents related to mental health and suicide to identify possible gaps in training. This is especially relevant with the introduction of Right Care Right Person.

What have the challenges been?

Like many organisations, uncertainty around finances continues, bringing challenges and a need to find significant annual savings. That said, the organisation takes its safeguarding responsibilities seriously and has invested in the expansion of the safeguarding team to meet demands and ever-

increasing referrals. Challenges when making referrals can be finding support for individuals who are self-neglecting, hoarding and/ or have substance misuse issues. Given that we are seeing an increase in incidents related to mental health, we find that timely resources are lacking which can mean fire crews being delayed at incidents where they are not the right people to be dealing with the situation. Our staff are very positive about safeguarding but receiving feedback following a referral would be beneficial so they can evidence what a difference the referral may have made to an individual.

Future organisational plans to continue work on SAB Strategic Plan priorities

Prevention is always at the forefront of our work. We are reviewing and increasing training and resources, with a particular focus on mental health, safer recruitment, preventative work for people who use emollients and application of 'Making Safeguarding Personal'. To support staff working at incidents with an individual in crisis, the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles ([JESIP](#)) guidance has been finalised and will be implemented soon along with negotiator awareness training being delivered to our technical rescue teams. We are also looking at the possibility of accessing other emergency service mental health support desks to support crews with a timely response when FRS is the only emergency service in attendance. This will be beneficial to staff and the individual.

HMP The Verne (Prison)

Achievements during 2023-2024

- Despite not being funded for resettlement of prisoners we have successfully re-housed the majority of prisoners in the past year on release
- We use a multi-disciplinary approach to preparing prisoners for release, recognising that this is one of the most vulnerable times for a prisoner, Weekly re-settlement meetings are held to discuss prisoners entering release and we signpost prisoners to support services ahead of release and co-ordinate with Community Offender Managers to minimise the risk of failure.
- Following introduction of the Neurodiversity Support Manager Role we now have a good understanding of the needs and vulnerabilities of the prison population with approximately 34% who are Neurodivergent. This has enabled us to put reasonable adjustments and support in place for them in education, skills and work. The overall aim being to reduce the risk of reoffending and focus on the needs of a population who have high rates of self-harm and suicidal ideation within the wider service.
- Significant steps have been taken to up-skill staff in terms of their knowledge of Neurodiversity and make HMP The Verne 'Neurodiversity friendly' for prisoners and staff.
- The Neurodiversity Support Manager has presented to the Dorset Domestic Abuse Forum to raise awareness of her work, which is as relevant to victims as it is to perpetrators.
- The Custodial Manager for Social Care has developed a positive relationship with the Local Authority. This has led to earlier identification of the support needs of prisoners and also timely Care Act referrals and assessments.
- The prison's social care unit opened this year to provide 24/7 support to prisoners with social care needs.
- 'Oxleas' our Healthcare provider has employed a Senior Occupational Therapist who will help in identification of support needs and the service we are able to deliver to prisoners on-site.

What have the challenges been?

- Ageing population with increasingly complex needs.
- We are not currently funded to provide 24/7 nursing care or palliative support.
- We are receiving prisoners much sooner after sentencing, receiving more younger prisoners, some of whom are vulnerable and susceptible to areas of risk such as grooming, county lines and have a history of substance misuse.
- Population of IPP (Imprisonment for Public Protection) prisoners is increasing and, nationally the rates of suicide among IPP prisoners are the highest. Whilst our data shows that the Verne does not reflect the national picture, we have put in place 'progression panels' and a support forum to support this vulnerable population.
- Employment opportunities for Prisoners Convicted of Sexual Offences (PCOSO) remain a challenge. Many are housed post-release in temporary accommodation 'Approved Premises' and require a period of stability before they are permitted to seek work. We know that employment is a key factor in reducing re-offending on release.
- High levels of self-harm among the prison population remains an ongoing area of safeguarding risk. For many prisoners this is an entrenched coping mechanism. However, the risk of accidental death during self-harm incidents remains high.

Future organisational plans to continue work on SAB Strategic Plan priorities

- Page 26
- Continue to embed staff with knowledge relating to areas of safeguarding risk i.e. grooming, self-harm, county lines.
 - Ongoing training for staff regarding the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Care Act 2014.
 - Review of current Safeguarding policy to ensure that it is in line with both national and local policy and covers areas of emerging risk due to population pressure and changes in demography of the prison population.
 - Continue to build links with the local community.

HMP Portland (Prison)

Achievements during 2023-2024

HMP Portland continues to run a weekly 'Release Planning Meeting' that identifies all prisoners within 12 weeks of release and checks that either accommodation is in place, or appropriate measures have been taken, such as DTR (Duty to Refer) and CRS (Commissioned Rehabilitative Services) to ensure accommodation can be provided as soon as practicable on release. Those prisoners assessed as vulnerable are prioritised and where gaps are identified, actions are taken from the meeting to provide the necessary support. This involves multi-agency working with the Prison Offender Manager and the Community Offender Manager acting as liaison between prison and community services.

HMP Portland has successfully implemented the ECSL scheme (End of Custody Supervised Licence). ECSL is an administrative and operational scheme that enables the release of eligible prisoners for a period (the Specified ECSL Licence Period) in advance of their Conditional Release Date. Those prisoners released on ECSL will be subject to the full range of licence conditions (including good behaviour) following release.

ECSL will only apply to a specified number of establishments where local population trends indicate that maintaining safe and decent conditions and future new prisoners from courts will require the implementation of this scheme. We have worked closely with probation departments to ensure that those being released under ECSL have been done so in a safe manner. Anyone who was considered to pose a risk to themselves or others, who had Approved Premises accommodation at their conditional release date but not on their ECSL date, were kept in custody until their CRD or until the bed could be brought forward.

The Community Accommodation Service level 3 has been introduced so that all prisoners will have up to 84 nights in basic accommodation provided but this is not available for those men who are released without any supervision from Probation. Those staff involved in domestic visits and family days have completed online safeguarding training.

What have the challenges been?

A shortage of staff in the Pre-Release Team and in the Offender Management Unit and a significant challenge continues to be the volume of prisoners who have been recalled to the prison who, when released at end of sentence with no Probation supervision, have very limited access to support.

HMP Portland is committed to working on this area of need to support by expanding the Pre-Release on supervision and escalate to a manager in the community when support is not being provided leading up to release. Continual changes to early release schemes have put pressure on probation, prison offender managers and pre-release teams due to tight timeframes in which individuals must be released. HMP Portland has developed a working group and strategies to support the safe release, with the pre-release team commencing work earlier than the 12 week point to ensure that all individuals are captured.

Future organisational plans to continue work on SAB Strategic Plan priorities

Homelessness: lack of suitable accommodation on release has been shown to have a direct impact on mental health, likelihood of reoffending, risk of self-harm, drug and alcohol misuse etc.

There are many measures in place within the prison to support vulnerable adults such as the CSIP (Challenge, Support and Intervention Plan), SIM (Safety Intervention Meeting), ACCT (Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork) document. However, where support is not there in the community, other agencies are hampered when someone has no fixed abode.

- Continue information sharing with external partners on individual risk to ensure safeguarding measures are in place both in custody and upon release.
- The introduction of resettlement fayres which involve numerous external agencies and employers. These fayres can be accessed by those working towards release.

Dorset Probation Service

Achievements during 2023-2024

- We have ensured that all practitioner staff in Dorset have undertaken training and have an understanding of the Multi-Agency Risk Management (MARM) process and that it is considered for all appropriate cases.
- All staff are required to complete mandatory training on adult safeguarding. We have also raised awareness amongst middle managers in the organisation to ensure that they are aware when consideration of a Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) referral should be made. Learning from a SAR was utilised as part of a MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) development conference which received positive feedback from attendees.

What have the challenges been?

Ensuring continuity of care within a criminal justice system can be a challenge particularly as some people are placed in prisons outside of the Dorset area and may be assessed in other areas of the country. Prison capacity concerns has meant we've seen people released with less time to prepare for release which has been a challenge when there are needs such as social care to coordinate.

Future organisational plans to continue work on SAB Strategic Plan priorities

- We are going to promote stronger awareness of the needs and challenges related to adult safeguarding in the Criminal Justice System and improve collaboration from all partners. This will include contributing to an extraordinary board meeting of the Adult Safeguarding Board focused on Criminal Justice topics and learning.
- We aim to present learning on developing more efficient working within the MAPPA process, overcome challenges relating to managing a higher proportion of people with social care needs both in prison and the community and raising awareness of the roles such as that of the Health and Justice Coordinator in Probation.

South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SWASFT)

Achievements during 2023-2024

- Effective Governance - Safeguarding Team Governance processes have been enhanced to include a Safeguarding Committee meeting bi-monthly to monitor safeguarding activity and provide assurance on safeguarding practice. The Safeguarding Committee reports to the Quality Committee providing assurance and raising issues for escalation. The Quality Committee reports into the Trust Board. Safeguarding reports are provided to commissioners via NHS Dorset Integrated Care Board (ICB) and The Head of Safeguarding from Dorset is a member of the Safeguarding Committee.
- Effective Learning - In late 2023 a review of SWASFT safeguarding training was completed by independent reviewers. The review identified the need to strengthen safeguarding training and to undertake a Training Needs Analysis to review training provided to each staff group. This action has been completed and a revised training offer is in place for 2024/25 which includes an additional 4.5 hour face-to-face safeguarding training on the development days, bespoke face to face training for the Emergency Operations Centres and enhanced two-day level 3 safeguarding training for identified senior staff groups. The delivery of formal training will also be supported by ad-hoc learning opportunities, digital learning resources, bespoke targeted training sessions and the provision of safeguarding supervision by the Safeguarding Specialists.
 - Effective Prevention and Protection - The safeguarding team has undertaken a full review of all referral forms, revised to ensure they align to the Care Act, and to provide local authority colleagues with the information they require to facilitate triage of Safeguarding Concerns raised. These also support SWASFT staff in raising high quality referrals and increase availability of data to support assurance reporting, audit and team learning and development.

What have the challenges been?

SWASFT safeguarding team had limited resource and capacity during 2023/24. This, coupled with a manual referral system handling approx. 51,000 referrals in the year across the whole SW region made it challenging for the team to progress with service improvement and to be a visible partner in the wider system. This has improved following the recruitment of a permanent Head of Safeguarding, a Deputy and an additional 5 Safeguarding specialists

Future organisational plans to continue work on SAB Strategic Plan priorities

SWASFT safeguarding improvement plan was developed following an independent review of safeguarding during 2023/24. Our plan is framed around 5 key deliverables which closely align to the SABs strategic plan. These are robust governance, assurance & reporting; Safeguarding team capacity, a new safeguarding referral system, data capture, audit and learning from incidents; and safeguarding education & supervision.

A Safeguarding Story

In the previous pages Board members have shared how they have worked towards achieving the Boards' objectives. It is important to answer the '... and so what?' question - the context of how this might help safeguard an individual.

At its meetings the Board always showcases a person's story, evidencing some of the work undertaken by agencies in Dorset to safeguard people. Here is Cecily's story.

Cecily and her late husband retired to Dorset where they lived in a beautiful home overlooking the sea. Cecily owned her home and had other financial assets. Cecily had enjoyed meeting people through her work and had always taken great care of her appearance; this continued after she retired. She had a great sense of humour and enjoyed the company of others.

Cecily employed a local woman, Lena, to provide care for her over a 9-year period. Of note is that Cecily's support needs increased significantly following a hospital admission to include night care. It is possible that Lena and Cecily met when Cecily had respite in a local care home where Lena was working.

A safeguarding concern was raised by an anonymous person, who later identified themselves as someone who provided 'relief' cover when Lena was unavailable. They were fearful of Lena hence remaining anonymous. The safeguarding concerns raised included financial abuse, neglect and coercive and controlling behaviour towards Cecily.

A number of different agencies were involved including Dorset Police, the GP, an Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA), the Adult Social Care Locality Team and Children's Social Care (CSC). CSC were involved after it was alleged that Lena's child was also providing care to Cecily. There were also concerns about Domestic Abuse in Lena's household and the impact on her own child (discussed at a High Risk Domestic Abuse meeting, HRDA) as well as drug/ alcohol use. CSC advised adult safeguarding of concerns about the family which supported the adult safeguarding process and robust multi-agency risk management.

The Safeguarding Practitioner built a positive relationship with Cecily over several months to enable her to speak about the abuse and understand the coercive behaviour she was experiencing. Cecily was consulted at every stage and her views and wishes heard. After a period in hospital, Cecily was able to return to her home and was supported to identify suitable live-in carers by the hospital and locality teams. Cecily was supported by the locality team for several months to support her move home and ensure she received the right care and support including the provision of equipment and assistive technology.

This story is a good example of Multi-Agency/ System working, involving an Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA), Dorset Police, Adult Social Care Locality Team, Nursing/ GP, Mental Capacity Act Team and Children's Social Care (CSC). Making Safeguarding Personal principles were used, Cecily's views and wishes were heard at all stages of the safeguarding intervention. The safeguarding team have developed closer working relationships with the CSC Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and now have a clear process in place regarding how information is shared.

Thank you for reading our Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2023-24.

If you would like to get in touch, please do so using the following email or telephone contact details:

dsab@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk or contact our Business team at bcpsafeguardingadultsboard@bcpcouncil.gov.uk Tel: 01202 794300

BRIEFING NOTE

Prisoner Early Release Scheme

The Prisoner Early Release Scheme had a very small impact on the Dorset Council area, with only two people released, and was managed well. The Probation service led the coordination of the exercise and informed and involved relevant agencies, including Dorset Council and BCP Council. There were ten cases leading to people being released on 10 September 2024. Nine of these were in BCP and one was in Dorset. There were nine cases leading to people being released on 22 October 2024. Eight of these were in BCP and one was in Dorset.

All cases where people were released from prison on those two days were subject to internal auditing by the Head of the Probation Delivery Unit for Dorset and other Probation managers throughout the process. The independent Operational and Assurance Group plan a review on these cases twelve weeks after release to ensure all required actions were completed and report on Probation's service delivery. All cases have had the required safeguarding checks in place prior to release. Probation's MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) coordinator has screened all cases to ensure correct identification of level setting including discussions with police colleagues where necessary.

Other people were released from prison, as 'business as usual' cases after these dates. These releases were managed and planned as normal.

Andrew Billany
Corporate Director for Housing and Community Safety

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Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee / People and Health Scrutiny Committee

14 November 2024

Corporate Complaints Team Annual Report 2023-24

For Review and Consultation

Cabinet Member and Portfolio:

Cllr N Ireland, Leader of the Council, Climate, Performance and Safeguarding
Cllr R Hope, Customer, Culture and Community Engagement

Executive Director:

J Mair, Director of Legal & Democratic

Report Author: Antony Bygrave
Title: Complaints Manager
Tel: 01305 225011
Email: antony.bygrave@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

This annual report at Appendix A provides an update on the numbers, types and outcomes of complaints made against Dorset Council during 2023/24. This includes content that meets the statutory reporting requirements of Children's and Adult's Services.

Recommendation: That the Committee scrutinises and notes the Annual Complaints Report for 2023/24.

Reason for Recommendation: To have an awareness of the numbers and types of complaints and the organisational learning.

1. **Key Messages for 2023/24**

- 1.1 Dorset Council received 1,588 Complaint Contacts. This is an 13% decrease from the 1,838 received in 2022-23 but still the second highest number of complaints in Dorset Council's 5-year history. We are

- encouraged that the Complaints function is still easy to find, and the reduction on overall complaints points to the success we have had in promoting local resolution before complaining, largely in the Place directorate.
- 1.2 Out of the 1,588 contacts, **772** of these were considered as formal complaints. This is an increase in formal complaints year on year, but our focus on early resolution continues to pay dividends for both council staff and those complaining. We do however need to ensure that we don't obstruct statutory processes due to the significantly increased demand.
 - 1.3 Of the 1,588 complaints received 2023-24 **816** were considered as cases where resolution could be met without the undue process of the formal complaints route. The informal complaints is where we have seen the overall decrease in complaint contacts, largely as we are identifying service requests more easily and getting them resolved.
 - 1.4 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) issue an annual report to the Chief Executive. This set out that that 79% of Dorset Council complaints they investigated were upheld. According to the report, this is consistent with other Councils, but does show a slight increase on the 72% upheld the previous year both locally and (again) as an average across comparable authorities. With the 1,588 complaints in 2023-24 being the second highest number since Dorset Council was formed, Councillors should be heartened that only 117 (7%) reached the LGSCO at all. This is a reduction from the 124 the previous year. This demonstrates that the majority of the time Dorset Council get it right first time, and has a positive culture around complaints, learnings and actions.
 - 1.5 Of the 117 approaches, only 42 were investigated and 33 of these upheld. 21 of these were in Children's Services with 20 relating to SEND matters and children out of education, 7 Adult Social Care and 5 in Place. The key observation from the LGSCO's figures is that we are missing an opportunity to resolve upheld complaints in line with their remedies guidance. Dorset Council met the recommendations of the LGSCO in 100% of these cases.
 - 1.6 17% of responses exceeded the 20-working day timescale which compares to 21% the previous year. This still indicates an area for further improvement, but is encouraging.
 - 1.7 Only 9% of complaints were considered fully justified with 11% part justified. This is essentially the same as the previous year and forms evidence that, although complaint numbers have shown an increase across the last five years, service delivery is not falling across the directorates.

- 1.8 There were 196 learning points collected by the Complaints Team in 2023-24. This is a slight reduction, but is again proportionate to the decrease in complaint numbers. It does evidence that, if complaints are being upheld in full or in part, we are getting value from the complaint as an organisation
- 1.9 We are pleased to report 568 compliments across the directorates compared to 520 the previous year. This is something for Dorset Council to celebrate and hopefully presents a more balanced report on service perceptions. It is still clear that people were more likely to voice complaints, than compliment a job well done. That said, it is likely that a number of compliments are reported directly to services without escalation to the corporate complaints team and therefore are not captured within this report. Compliments by Directorate during 2023/24 are as follows: Place 310, Children's 111, Adults 103, Corporate 44.
- 1.10 In addition, we received 51 code of conduct complaints regarding Dorset Council and Town and Parish Councillors in the county area (some 160 councils and 1,400 councillors). This is an 8% Increase on the previous year. Of these, just 2 were investigated and none upheld at the time of this report. In line with our approach to other complaints, we will look in the future to how we can learn from complaints about councillors as part of promoting high standards of conduct.
- 1.11 The Complaints Team, as an Assurance function, continue to make a difference in promoting a culture of learning from complaints, and provide support to managers across the directorates in resolving complaints without undue process, where possible.
- 1.12 An internal audit on Children's Services social care complaints identified a number of findings to improve the management of complaints within both Children's Services and the Corporate Complaints function. These will be tracked and reported via Audit and Governance Committee.
- 1.13 The Corporate Complaints policy has been updated to respond to the LGSCO's new best practice code, and this will be subject to approval by Audit and Governance Committee in January 2025.

2. **Financial Implications**

- 2.1 Dorset Council financial remedies in 2023-24 resulting in a total cost of £71,608.96 which is a significant increase on 2022-23 where Ombudsman findings totalled £40,630 and 42,300 in 2021-22 respectively. This breaks down as £69,608.96 in relation to SEND and children out of education,

and £2000 for Adult Social Care. However, one of the SEND cases was obstructed by the complainant as they refused payment, favouring a legal route. This has yet to come to fruition and the Ombudsman closed the case in the knowledge that the payment was never made. So, in terms of actual payments made, Dorset Council paid £40,408.96, with £38,408.96 of that related to SEND matters.

- 2.2 Outside of Children's Services, (as above) the only other payments totalled £2,000 across 6 Adult Social Care cases. Place Directorate receive the largest number of complaints, but the LGSCO only found fault in 5 cases and no financial penalty.
- 2.3 Stage 2 investigations cost Children's Services £12,394.84 on Independent Investigators.
- 2.4 Whilst reporting on the outgoing finance it is important to note that the Complaints Team have generated £9,240.17 (up from £7,376) from schools by providing a complaints advice service.

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

- 3.1 None

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

- 4.1 The consistently high volume of complaints, coupled with associated vexatious behaviour continues to have an impact on the wellbeing for colleagues involved with complaint handling and response. The team and associated colleagues are regularly encouraged, through line management and other Dorset Council support, to be mindful of themselves and their colleagues in-keeping with our behaviours.

5. **Other Implications**

- 5.1 None

6. **Risk Assessment**

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

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

7. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

7.1 The complaints policy was subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.

8. **Appendices**

8.1 Appendix A – Annual Complaints Report









9. **Background Papers**

9.1 None

10. **Report Sign Off**

10.1 This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s).

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	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	
 Number of FORMAL complaints	544	747	772	2023/24 saw a slight increase in formal complaints (detailed overleaf).
 Number of INFORMAL complaints	862	1091	816	2023/24 saw a reduction in informal complaints (detailed overleaf).
 Upheld approaches to the LGSCO Ombudsman compared to total received	20/35	26/114	33/117	In 2023/24 we received 117 approaches from the LGSCO. 33 complaints were upheld.
 Timescales (overdue)	18%	21%	18%	In 2023/24 18% of all complaints exceeded the deadline for response.
 % fully justified complaints	8%	9%	8%	2023/24 continued to see a low volume of complaints reported as fully justified.
 % part justified complaints	9%	11%	9%	2023/24 continued to see a low volume of complaints reported as partially justified.
 Compliments	380	537	569	We received 569 compliments in 2023/24
 Learnings	127	212	192	We gathered 192 learnings from complaints in 2023/24 (details overleaf).

Total Complaints Overview

1588 Complaints

performance

2023/24

Numbers

Total Complaint Contacts – 1588

This is an 13% decrease from the 1838 received in 2022-23 but still the second highest number of complaints in Dorset Council's 5 year history. We are encouraged that the Complaints function is still easy to find, and the reduction on overall complaints points to the success we have had in promoting local resolution before complaining in the Place directorate.

The Complaints function is a learning mechanism for Dorset Council as well as an early warning system. This report highlights the areas of possible concern as well as the valuable organisational learning. However, we should be encouraged by the reduction in SEND (Childrens non Social Care) complaints

Directorate	2023-24	2022-23	%
Adult Social Care	117	143	-22%
Adult Non Social care	122	138	-13%
Childrens Social Care	139	140	+1%
Children s Non Social Care	248	309	-24%
Place	791	937	-18%
Corporate	171	168	+2%
Code of Conduct*	51	44	+16%
TOTALS	1588	1838	-13%

Formal Complaints 772

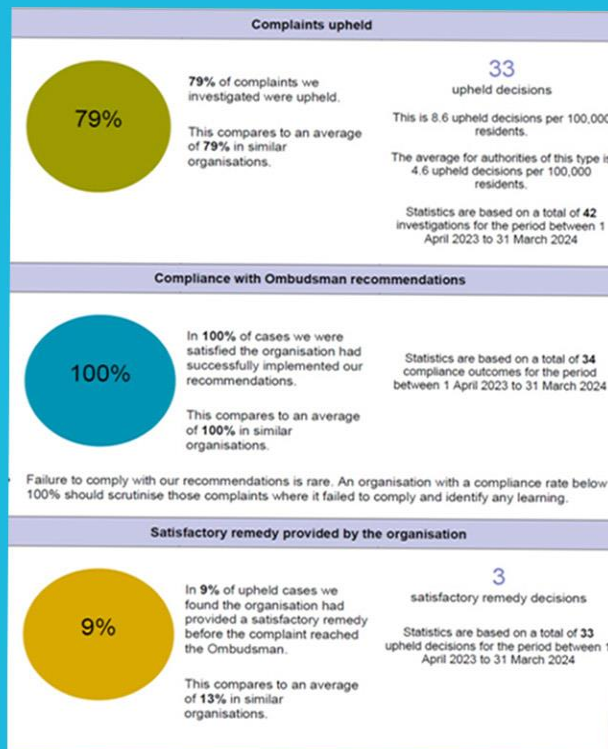
Out of the 1588 contacts, 772 of these were considered as formal complaints. The focus on early resolution continues to pay dividends for both council staff and those complaining but we need to ensure that we don't obstruct statutory processes due to the significantly increased demand.

The figures in the infographics demonstrate that the split between complaints that require formal resolution, and those that appear resolvable, is similar to the previous year.

Informal Complaints 816

Of the 1588 complaints received 2023-24 816 were considered as cases where resolution could be met without the undue process of the formal complaints route.

The Ombudsman's Handling Code (when they formally start using it later in the year) will limit informal resolution and we will expect complaint volumes to rise sharply as there is no 'Informal/Stage 0' option. We welcome the clarify and will still apply common sense, but through the complaints process



2023/24

The Ombudsman report that 79% of complaints they investigated were upheld. This is exactly the same in other organisations, but does show a slight increase on the 72% upheld the previous year both locally and (again) as an average across comparable authorities.

However, this only tells a small part of the story.

The Complaints Team received and managed 1659 complaints in 2023-24 which is the second highest number since Dorset Council was formed. Councillors and Members should be heartened that of these 1659 complaints only 117 (7%) reached the Ombudsman at all, which is actually a reduction from the 124 the previous year. This demonstrates that the majority of the time Dorset Council get it right first time, and have a positive culture around complaints, learnings and actions

Of the 117 approaches only 42 were investigated and 33 of these upheld. The key observation from the Ombudsman's figures are that we are missing an opportunity to resolve upheld complaints in line with their financial remedies guidance. The Corporate Complaints Team provide remedies guidance to managers as part of the process, and the expectation is we recognise this if we are upholding complaints. Essentially Dorset Council want to do the Ombudsman's job for them in terms of upheld complaint investigations and as a Council we only achieving this on a small number of cases. This is a point to improve on as an authority.

These were the success stories who pre-empted the Ombudsman successfully

Category	Reference	Decision	Decision Reason
Education & Childrens Services	2 3017734	Upheld	Injustice remedied during LGO consideration
Highways & Transport	2005119	Upheld	Injustice remedied during organisations complaint processes
Planning & Development	22010953	Upheld	Injustice remedied during organisations complaint processes

Dorset Council met the recommendations in 100% of these cases.

Overall the Ombudsman's involvement breaks down as follow:

Category	LGSCO Approaches	Investigated	Upheld	Upheld Previous Year
Adult Care Services	16	8	7	4
Benefits & Tax	3	0	0	0
Corporate & Other Services	7	0	0	0
Education & Childrens Services	45	24	21	17
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	12	3	0	1
Highways & Transport	10	2	2	0
Housing	7	0	0	0
Planning & Development	26	5	3	2

So as in 2022-23, SEND related complaints dominate the Ombudsman's involvement. This again is largely due to children out of education in Dorset and a lack of available, suitable placements. This is a national issue, but we have taken steps to improve communication and be more available before matters escalate to complaints.

Strictly speaking Dorset Council financial remedies in 2023-24 resulting in a total cost of £71,608.96 which is a tremendously large increase on 2022-23 where Ombudsman findings totalled £40,630 and 42,300 in 2021-22.

This breaks down as £69,608.96 in relation to SEND and children out of education, and £2000 for Adult Social Care. However, one of the SEND cases was obstructed by the complainant as they refused payment, favouring a legal route. This has yet to come to fruition and the Ombudsman closed the case in the knowledge that the payment was never made. So in terms of actual payments made, Dorset Council paid £40,408.96, with £38,408.96 of that related to SEND matters

Outside of Children's Services, (as above) the only other payments totalled £2000 across 6 Adult Social Care cases. Place with the largest number of complaints as a directorate, come out of the year very well indeed and should be pleased with the Ombudsman's report finding fault in only 5 cases:

Total Complaints Overview

2023/24

Highways & Transport - 22007648

We found fault on Mr J's complaint about the Council's decision to replace street lights near his home. It failed to show it properly considered the location's zone under its policy. It did not consider the impact of the replacement lights or assess their impact after installation. It refused to carry out night visits during summer months without considering possible exceptions.

The Council agreed to ensure recorded and reasoned future decisions about street lighting replacement properly consider area zoning. The Council agreed to ensure impact assessments of replacement LEDs for old sodium bulbs in old lanterns are carried out and considered before and after installation. The Council agreed to remind relevant officers of the need to provide meter readings when these are referred to in a response to our enquiries. The Council agreed to review the ability to exercise discretion to carry out night visits during the summer months, how this might be implemented, and provide officer guidance on it.

Highways & Transport - 23005119

We will not investigate this complaint about the Council's failure to tell a school about a road closure due to roadworks.

The Council has acknowledged failings in its procedure for scheduled roadworks. It has apologised to the Headteacher and confirmed the lessons it has learned from the incident.

We will not investigate Mr X's complaint because the Council has acknowledged its errors and apologised to Mr X. It has investigated the incident and identified its failings and what should be done to ensure the same errors do not reoccur. We consider this to be a suitable remedy to the complaint. We do not consider further investigation will lead to a different outcome.

Planning & Development – 22010953

We will not investigate this complaint about the Council's decision to grant planning permission to correct a breach of planning control. Also it is too late to consider complaints about decisions to grant planning permission made more than four years ago. Finally, we are satisfied that an apology for the delay in updating the complainant of the progress of a planning enforcement investigation is a suitable remedy for this part of the complaint.

We will not investigate Miss X's complaint because:

- we will not exercise discretion and investigate complaints about planning permission granted more than a year ago as there is no good reason to do so
- there is no evidence of fault in the way the Council considered the retrospective planning application to keep the increased parking area; and the Council has apologised for the failure to update her on the progress of its planning enforcement investigation. We consider this to be a suitable remedy to this part of the complaint.

Planning & Development – 22016217

Mr B says the Council failed to consider the impact a development would have on him and failed to consider his objections.

The Council failed to properly consider the impact the development would have on Mr B's solar panels and kitchen and failed to link all his objections to the planning record. That likely did not affect the decision to approve the application

The Council will remind

planning officers of the need to ensure all objections are uploaded to the online record for the planning application and considered in the report for the application

Planning & Development – 23005667

complained the Council lost planning control of a site on land next to their home that affects an area of outstanding natural beauty. Based on the information seen so far, there was fault for which the Council should apologise for the disappointment and frustration it caused to X.

We know that the Council intended to take enforcement action but did not do so. It seems likely its enforcement officer had assumed the Planning Inspectorate decision was an appeal to an enforcement notice. However, it was an appeal on a refusal of planning permission and no enforcement notice had been served. Because the Council did not serve its notice in time, The Council agreed to continue its review of its planning enforcement service and the drafting of its new enforcement policy so that it is ready to present to the first available meeting of the relevant scrutiny committee following the elections in May 2024. The review will include work practices and procedures, staffing levels and other resources necessary for the Council to deliver its planning enforcement service.

The Childrens and Adults payments feature in the Appendices

Total Complaints Overview

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2023/24

2023/24

Councillor Code of Conduct

The Corporate Team have been delegated the management of the Code of Conduct Complaints and report an 8% increase. This table offers a breakdown of Dorset Council, and Parish & Town Council complaints and captures how few have real substance

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Code of Conduct Complaints	60	47	51
Dorset Councillor Conduct Complaints	10	10	17
Number of Councillors	82	82	82
% of Councillors subject to Complaint	12%	12%	21%
Number Investigated	0	1	1
Number Upheld*	0	0	1
Parish & Town Councillor Conduct Complaints	50	37	34
Number of Councillors	1400	1400	1400
% of Councillors subject to Complaint	4%	3%	2%
Number Investigated	3	6	1
Number Upheld*	0	0	0

Timescales – 17% Overdue

This is encouraging as 18% were overdue the previous year. This still demonstrates the impacts of the large numbers coming into the corporate complaints team and the challenges for team managers in helping us promote timely responses. The improvement is proportionate to the slight reduction in numbers.

The complaints procedures operated by the Council vary in timescales for responses. The Whole Authority procedure is 20 working days, the Children's Services Social Care procedure is 10 working days, up to 20 by exception (with automatic escalation to an independent investigation if not met. This can be costly). The Adult Social Care procedure does not specify exact timescales, and we are now looking to establish these on a case by case basis depending on the gravity and risk of the complaint and the time needed to investigate it.

Justifications – 9% fully 11% partially

This is the same as the previous year. It may still seem surprising that so few complaints are considered to be justified by responding managers, but the real challenge is to ensure the justified complaints contribute to the lessons learned and continual improvement

Compliments – 568

We are pleased to report 568 compliments across the directorates compared to 520 the previous year. This is something for Dorset Council to celebrate and hopefully presents a more balanced report on service perceptions. It is still clear that people were more likely to voice complaints, than compliment a job well done. These split into directorates as follows: Place 310, Childrens 111, Adults 103, Corporate 44

Learnings - 196

We are pleased to report 196 learnings from complaints in 2023-24 which is an excellent return. Especially as the learnings are now so measurable and present genuine action plans that close loops in the service areas. This is a similar number to 2022-24 but achieved over a fewer number of complaints, so really impressive as it demonstrates commitment to providing genuine value from peoples complaints to Dorset Council

Total Complaints Overview

2023/24

Background

The purpose of this report is to highlight key issues from the Annual Report for Complaints 2023/24. There is a full annual report to support this executive summary together with material to meet the statutory functions associated with Social Care.

Introduction

The Corporate Complaints Team sit in Legal & Democratic as an Assurance function, with the emphasis more on learning from complaints, rather than merely processing numbers. As the report will show the greater level of scrutiny on services remains year on year with an increase in most directorates

The Complaints Team have also been heavily involved in helping Dorset Council manage vexatious and unreasonable behaviours.

The council operates 4 complaints procedures. The Council's own – which is a one stage process with a review process as necessary and Children's Services and Adult Services Social Care have their own legal procedures. Full details of these procedures are found in Appendix 1 and 3 as full reports which are required to satisfy legislation. We have also been delegated the Councillor Code of Conduct complaints to triage and manage. Although not contributing greatly to the overall numbers, it has been an interesting experience trying to apply the same culture of learning to a new and unfamiliar policy to the team.

The team's focus for this coming year is:

Team Wellbeing and Development – Further galvanising a team to deal with increasingly upsetting subject matter, and (at times) vexatious behaviours. We have been very vocal in ensuring staff are aware of the support available.









Reporting/Learning – 2023-24 saw an improvement in the quality of learnings presented by team managers. There is a genuine mutual awareness for delivering extra value. However some complaints are resolvable without grass-roots learnings presenting themselves.

Total Complaints Overview

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2023/24

2023/24









	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
 Number of FORMAL complaints	168	209	201	194	772
 Number of INFORMAL complaints	247	219	160	190	816
 Upheld approaches to the LGSCO Ombudsman compared to total received	7/19	15/27	7/27	6/36	33/117
 Timescales (overdue)	18%	18%	15%	19%	18%
 % fully justified complaints	10%	7%	8%	6%	8%
 % part justified complaints	10%	10%	9%	8%	9%
 Compliments	131	126	156	156	569
 Learnings	56	58	26	52	192

Total Quarterly Complaints Overview
Total Complaints 23/24 = 1588

performance

dorsetcomplaints

2023/24









		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
	Number of FORMAL complaints	52	82	70	65	269
	Number of INFORMAL complaints	168	154	102	98	522
	Upheld approaches to the LGSCO Ombudsman compared to total received	0/12	3/10	2/11	0/10	5/43
	Timescales (overdue)	15%	18%	22%	17%	18%
	% fully justified complaints	7%	7%	8%	9%	8%
	% part justified complaints	9%	10%	9%	7%	9%
	Compliments	75	64	86	85	310
	Learnings	18	13	18	15	64

Place complaints
Total complaints = 791

performance

dorsetcomplaints

2023/24









		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
	Number of FORMAL complaints	15	20	25	24	84
	Number of INFORMAL complaints	25	12	16	34	87
	Upheld approaches to the LGSCO Ombudsman compared to total received	0/4	0/2	0/2	0/2	0/10
	Timescales (overdue)	8%	7%	8%	20%	11%
	% fully justified complaints	5%	6%	10%	0%	5%
	% part justified complaints	15%	12%	10%	8%	11%
	Compliments	14	13	7	10	44
	Learnings	1	2	1	9	13

Corporate Complaints
Total Complaints = 171

performance

dorsetcomplaints

2023/24









		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
	Number of FORMAL complaints	19	23	18	19	79
	Number of INFORMAL complaints	8	10	6	19	43
	Upheld approaches to the LGSCO Ombudsman compared to total received	0/4	0/1	0/0	0/2	0/7
	Timescales (overdue)	15%	24%	19%	21%	20%
	% fully justified complaints	10%	3%	4%	0%	4%
	% part justified complaints	3%	6%	13%	12%	9%
	Compliments	1	2	1	2	6
	Learnings	3	5	0	5	13

People - Adults non social care complaints
Total Complaints = 122

performance

dorsetcomplaints

2023/24









		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
	Number of FORMAL complaints	14	20	31	22	87
	Number of INFORMAL complaints	10	7	5	8	30
	Upheld approaches to the LGSCO Ombudsman compared to total received	3/4	2/3	1/5	2/5	7/16
	Timescales (overdue)	36%	22%	21%	29%	27%
	% fully justified complaints	10%	6%	0%	8%	6%
	% part justified complaints	3%	9%	17%	8%	9%
	Compliments	16	22	29	30	97
	Learnings	6	0	3	7	16

People - Adults- social are
Total complaints = 117

performance

dorsetcomplaints

2023/24









		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
	Number of FORMAL complaints	53	43	48	41	185
	Number of INFORMAL complaints	18	15	15	15	63
	Upheld approaches to the LGSCO Ombudsman compared to total received	4/5	9/10	4/9	4/17	20/40
	Timescales (overdue)	18%	14%	10%	14%	14%
	% fully justified complaints	23%	17%	6%	8%	14%
	% part justified complaints	20%	17%	16%	4%	14%
	Compliments	14	12	19	14	59
	Learnings	20	27	3	8	58

People - Children - non social care
Total Complaints = 248

performance

dorsetcomplaints

2023/24

		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
	Number of FORMAL complaints	15	21	9	20	65
	Number of INFORMAL complaints	14	21	16	23	74
	Upheld approaches to the LGSCO Ombudsman compared to total received	0/0	1/1	0/0	0/0	1/1
	Timescales (overdue)	18%	14%	10%	14%	14%
	% fully justified complaints	8%	7%	20%	8%	11%
	% part justified complaints	16%	7%	16%	16%	14%
	Compliments	11	13	14	15	53
	Learnings	8	14	1	8	31

People - Children - social care
Total complaints = 139

performance

Annual Complaints Report 2023-24

Appendices

Children's Service Statutory Reporting Requirements

Although the overall numbers for Childrens Complaints are similar year on year, this report will highlight the increase in formal Stage 1 complaints for Social Care, the timeliness of the responses and the trend in cases escalating.

Most complaints received are from parents (some estranged) and not necessarily representing the voice or best interest of the child. However, more of this issues raised 2023-24 have qualified for the statutory process and escalation route to stage 2 and 3. The majority of the Stage 2 escalations have been around CWAD and often seek a level of financial remedy which is not always possible in this process

The figures below show an increase in complaints over all for Childrens Social care, but not limited to Children in Care which feature further down the report. Representations capture the figures for complaints that were resolved informally outside of the Statutory Process

Happily this report will also offer assurances that SEND related complaints were beginning to fall during the year

Children's Social Care	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
Representations	74	106	91
Stage 1	64	34	29
Stage 2	5	1	1
Stage 3	1	0	0
LGSCO approaches	1 with 1 upheld (passed back to Council)	5 with 1 upheld	6 with 1 upheld
Children's Whole Authority	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
Representations	63	129	75
Formal Complaint	182	180	98
LGSCO approaches	24 with 21 upheld	35 with 16 upheld	13 with 6 upheld

5 cases were accepted at Stage 2 detailed below. This is up from just 1 in 2022-23 and we are looking more closely at why the stage 1 investigations are failing to resolve the complaints straight away

CASE no	Team locality	Brief Subject	Outcome Upheld/ Part/Not	Total cost of IO	Total cost of IP	Additional cost
COM/4822	CWAD	For a period of 8 months, prior to child being taken into care, the family had been struggling. No support was offered, or action taken by Children's Services to try and keep child in his home environment.	Partially Upheld	£3367.20	£2,117.74	None

Annual Complaints Report 2023-24

COM/3262	CWAD	The level of service and resourcing provided by Dorset Council is not sufficient to meet the assessed needs of complainant's son.	Upheld	£3,780	£1,207.50	None
COM/4613	CWAD	Mother has not had clear confirmation in writing from Dorset Council of a permanent housing arrangement that meets daughter's needs	Upheld	£1,462.90	£459.50	None
COM/4783	North	Mother believes that the social work practice that she has experienced as a parent under child in need has been poor and she has raised complaints that she feels have not been dealt with appropriately.	Withdrawn at Stg3	Withdrawn at Stg3	Withdrawn at Stg3	Withdrawn at Stg3
COM/3472	Chesil	Alleged errors in report, inappropriate comments from Social Worker and lack of contact with late father who was in prison.	Stage 2	Not yet known	Not yet known	Not yet known
TOTALS				£8,610.10	£3,784.74	£0
OVERALL COST						£12,394.84

Local Government Ombudsman (LGSCO)

The Local Government Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) investigates complaints from the public about councils and other bodies providing public services in England. It also investigates complaints about registered social care providers.

Social Care

Only 1 Social Care Case was presented to the Ombudsman that they queried with Dorset Council. After enquiry, they passed the case back to Dorset Council for local process escalation. This was classed as upheld, albeit still under investigation at Stage 2

Non Social Care

Of the 33 UPHELD cases across Dorset Council in total, 21 of 33 were in Childrens Services and 20 relating to SEND matters and children out of education. The other cases were in Adults (7) and 5 in Place

The findings are outlined below

Annual Complaints Report 2023-24

Reference And Remedy	Complaint in Brief	Service improvement recommendations
22006903 £500	Miss X complained that the Council failed to provide her son Y, with education set on his EHCP, and for failing to provide education when he was out of school. The issue of a lack of access to education prior to July 2021 is out of time and there are no good reasons to exercise discretion and investigate	Ensure relevant staff are appropriately trained with respect to the EHCP process. The Council should ensure staff are aware of the statutory timescales and that changeover of staff does not impact on process.
22007794 £31,200+ Rolling Cost (Unpaid as Mr M challenging via solicitor)	Mr X complained the Council failed to make suitable alternative educational provision or special educational needs provision for his sons, carry out annual reviews of their Education, Health and Care Plans, or respond to his requests for support and his complaints. We have found fault by the Council causing injustice	I have concluded my investigation having made a finding of fault. The issue of a lack of access to education prior to July 2021 is out of time and there are no good reasons to exercise discretion and investigate. Further. we also do not have jurisdiction to investigate the failure to provide said education post the EHCP issued in July 2021. This is because Miss X acquired a right of appeal against the Council's EHCP which she later exercised. There is however fault in the time taken for the Council to issue Y's EHCP after September 2022, and the Council has further acknowledged it has not delivered SALT sessions to Y. The Council have agreed to my recommendations.
22007859 £2000	Miss X complained the Council failed to provide her son, C, with suitable alternative education when he was unable to attend school. Miss X said this caused him to miss out on his education and has caused distress, frustration, and financial difficulties for the family.	33. By 29 June 2023 the Council will: · Apologise to Miss X for the distress caused. · Pay Miss X £1700 for the benefit of C's education (this has been worked out at £400 a month from January 2022 until May 2022 taking into account school holidays). Pay Miss X £300 for the distress and frustration caused. 34. The Council should provide us with evidence it has complied with the above actions.

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<p>22009300 £2200</p>	<p>Miss X complained about the way the Council handled educational provision for her son (B), her complaints, and her information. She said this caused her and B unnecessary distress, frustration and uncertainty, and the loss of education and social interaction with peers impacted on B.</p>	<p>The Council will remind staff of the Council's legal duties to provide alternative educational provision when a child is out of school for health reasons. The Council should consider sharing a copy of our focus report ("Out of school, out of sight? Ensuring children out of school get a good education") and our final decision with staff. The Council will remind all staff, including directors, that when they receive any communication which is or could be a complaint, they must pass it to the complaints team and/or relevant department.</p>
<p>22009845 £150</p>	<p>Miss B complained about the Council's handling of her concerns for her grandchild's welfare whilst in her son's care. The Council agreed it was at fault for failing to acknowledge and respond to her calls and it wrongly shared information about her contacts with his mother. We found it also failed to apologise as promised</p>	<p>The Council will remind relevant social care staff of its Recording Policy and Guidelines which sets out when information received from anonymous non-professionals should not be shared with children and parents. This would include sharing information about whether a person have reported concerns and the number of calls they have made. The Council will remind its social care staff to acknowledge and respond to contacts from non-professionals regarding concern about a child as set out in the Council's Recording Policy and Guidelines, or as agreed with the individual.</p>
<p>22011440 £3800</p>	<p>Ms X complains the Council failed to issue an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan for her child, B, within the statutory timeframe. She also complains the Council failed to provide B with suitable alternative education provision and communicated poorly. We have found the Council at fault for the delay in issuing a final EHC Plan. We have also found the Council at fault for failing to arrange suitable alternative provision for B for periods during the 2020/2021 and 2021/22 academic years.</p>	<p>The Council will remind officers of its duty, under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996, to provide provision or suitable education for children of compulsory age who cannot attend school, because of exclusion, medical reasons, or otherwise. The Council will remind officers of the Department for Education's statutory guidance, which says the Council should consider liaising with medical professionals, such as the child's GP, in cases where medical evidence is not readily available. The Council will remind officers of the importance of keeping proper, suitable records, and refer officers to the Ombudsman's Principles of Good Administrative Practice.</p>
<p>22013476 £1400</p>	<p>Ms X complains her child has had no education since December 2021 as a post- 16 college place did not work out. Ms X says that this has caused her and her child's mental health to decline.</p>	<p>The Council should pay Ms X £1400 within one month of the date of the decision on this complaint. The Council should provide us with evidence it has complied with the above actions.</p>
<p>22015157 £1600</p>	<p>Mrs X complained that the Council failed to provide alternative educational provision for her son, and</p>	<p>We find the Council at fault which caused injustice. The Council has agreed to apologise and make a payment to remedy the injustice.</p>

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	communicated poorly with her	
22015375 £100	Mr X complains the Council failed to safeguard his child from malicious referrals and threatened to take action against him in a meeting if he could not safeguard his child	The Council has agreed to remind staff that where the Council is the lead agency for a child, it should be ensuring there is a record of the meeting.
22015727 £5954	Miss Y complains the Council failed in its duty to provide a full-time education to her son, D, when they moved into its area last year. Although the Council has put some alternative provision in place, Miss Y says this is part time and not sufficient for D.	The Council will improve the way it makes decisions about requests for alternative provision. This could be in the form of staff training or a briefing paper. As part of this, the Council will draw officers' attention to the Section 19 duties, accompanying statutory guidance and the LGSCO's focus report 'Out of School, Out of Sight?'.
22016569 £600	Mrs A complained about the Council's failure to provide her son, S, with suitable education after he stopped attending school in October 2022	The Council agreed to share this decision with its SEN officers and emphasise the importance of keeping up the service standards for communications and the importance of the Council acting on its section 19 duties.
22016709 £1800	The Council took too long to issue the draft and final education, health, and care plans (EHC plans). It could not get an assessment from an educational psychologist. Throughout this period of delay, the provision set out in the existing EHC plan was not always in place, and the Council took too long to arrange alternative provision to support Mrs B's son	Share this decision with the relevant staff.
23001076 £4500	Mrs X complains the Council failed to provide the educational provision as set out in her son, Y's, EHCP. We have concluded our investigation having made a finding of fault. After Y stopped attending School A in November 2022, the Council failed to deliver the provision in Y's EHCP, nor did it appropriately consider its section 19 duty	Review its out of school procedures to ensure it meets its duties to secure alternative provision when its section 19 duty applies. The Council should also review its EHCP annual review procedure to ensure it follows the statutory process. The Council should inform the Ombudsman of the outcome of its review.

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<p>23001176 £400</p>	<p>Miss X complained the Council failed to issue an amended final Education, Health and Care plan for her daughter Y, in line with the statutory timescales before her transition to high school, and delayed her right of appeal.</p>	<p>The Council will provide training for all staff involved in special educational needs on its obligations under the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities code of practice, to include: the statutory guidelines to issue a final Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan by 15 February in years where a child is due to transition to secondary school; how it explains the EHC plan and review process to parents and ensures staff clearly explain review timelines in transition years; and the difference between the EHC plan review deadline and the school admissions deadline for secondary school placements.</p>
<p>23001987 None</p>	<p>Mrs X complained that the Council delayed arranging a suitable school placement for her child and communicated poorly with her. Mrs X said this caused unnecessary and avoidable distress and frustration, and caused her child stress and anxiety. We find the Council at fault for communicating poorly.</p>	<p>In its complaint response, the Council explained that it did not accept the specialist setting's offer of a place for C because it felt a mainstream school could meet C's needs. It said it was gathering more information about C's needs and would bring C's case back to the panel to reconsider the request for a specialist setting. The Council agreed that it had communicated poorly with Mrs X. The Council apologised for this.</p>
<p>23004838 £8900</p>	<p>Mrs Y complained the Council failed to provide her child, Z, with a suitable education when they were unable to attend school, review their Education Health and Care Plan and communicate properly with her. We have found fault by the Council in failing to make alternative provision for Z, complete a phase transfer review within the required timescale and communicate properly with Mrs Y, causing injustice.</p>	<p>The Council has agreed to review its procedures for ensuring officers: consider the Council's section19 duty at appropriate stages; make decisions about this duty promptly; properly record the reasons for their decisions; and communicate decisions to parents and carers; and report to us on the outcome of the review and any changes made.</p>

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<p>23009049 £850</p>	<p>Miss X complained about the Council's failure to issue her son's Education, Health and Care Plan within statutory timescales. The Council was at fault because it took too long to issue the plan following an annual review. We have also found the Council at fault for not communicating with Miss X effectively</p>	<p>As the Council proposed to amend Y's EHC Plan, it should have sent out details of the proposed amendments within 4 weeks of the annual review meeting and the final amended plan within 8 weeks of the proposed amendments. Therefore, the Council should have finalised Y's EHC Plan by 24 April 2023. However, the Council issued Y's final EHC Plan on 7 August 2023. This was fault and amounted to a delay of 15 weeks in producing a final EHC Plan. The Council says the delay in finalising the EHC Plan was the reason why it did not consult with placements sooner. This is a further injustice to Miss X and to Y.</p>
<p>23009232 £250</p>	<p>Mr X complained the Council proposed an inadequate and inappropriate Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plan for his child. He also complained the Council was incompetent and unprofessional in its handling of further drafts. We found fault with the Council for delaying production of the EHC Plan.</p>	<p>This delay of seven months was fault. There are various reasons for this delay, such as revisions being needed to the Draft EHC Plans and delays in getting information, such as from the school. However, this does not mitigate the fault of the Council in failing to meet the statutory timescales. 37. These delays have caused a delay in Mr X being able to engage his appeal rights to the tribunal. In addition, the delays have caused Mr X inconvenience, stress and frustration. 38. While this has impacted Mr X, this has not caused an injustice to Y. This is because the educational provision outlined in Y's 2019 EHC Plan is comparable to the provision detailed in the 2023 EHC Plan. What has changed between the two EHC Plans is the outcomes. Since Y continued to receive the same level of support he would have been entitled to, this has not put Y to a disadvantage. 39. The Council was also at fault for putting incorrect information and making errors in Y's Draft EHC Plans. Mr X has pointed to numerous typographical errors, misinformation and referring to his child by the incorrect name. While the Council has corrected these errors when it produced the Final EHC Plan, these errors will have added to Mr X's inconvenience and frustration.</p>

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23009368 £1754.96	Ms X complained the Council wrongly refused her application for home to school transport for her child Y to the school named in Y's Education, Health and Care Plan.	The Council will provide training/updated guidance to all relevant staff (Special Educational Needs and Disability and transport teams) on how to apply the Dudley test for pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans and the implications of only naming one school, without conditions, in an Education, Health and Care Plan.
23017734 None	Miss X, says the Council failed to properly reply to her children services' complaint.	Progressed to Stage 2
21017726 £1650	Mrs X complained the Council delayed issuing her son's Education, Health and Care plan and it failed to secure suitable alternative provision while it sourced a suitable school place for him	The Council acknowledged the delay in issuing the Education Health and Care plan. We found fault in the alternative provision the Council secured. The Council has agreed to apologise to Mrs X and make a payment in recognition of the injustice caused by the faults

Total = £69,608.96 (£31,200+ rolling unclaimed)

Which customer groups made the complaints;

Of the small number of complainants who categorised themselves, we present the following data on who is complaining to children's services Social Care

Young Person	5
Grandparent	3
Group	1
Individual	2
Parent	36
Advocate	2
Customer	15
Other Relative	2

The types of complaints made;

Most complaints fall under subcategories of Service Provision, largely around delays of perceived failures to deliver a service

Themes	Children's Social Care
Communication	7%
Data	3%
Finance	0%
Policy - Disagreement with Decision	18%

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Service Provision - Delay	0%
Professional Practice/Quality of Service	65%
Misconduct	5%
Other	2%

The outcome of complaints;

Of the complaints received for Children’s Social Care in 2023-24 only 11% were considered Fully Justified by operational managers shows there is some level of justification as outlined below:

Fully Justified	11% up from 7% last year
Partially Justified	14% the same as last year
Not justified	75% down from 79% last year

In 2023-24 the Complaints Team have improved the quarterly reporting and added extra value in terms of learnings and actions from complaints. In many cases however the complaints process is used by parents who are unhappy with records held that cant be legally altered. There is always more work to do in providing robust assurance of our self assessment of the services we provide.

Focus on Children in Care

The table below demonstrates a breakdown of Children in Care complaints. All complaints by young people are coming to the Complaints team via an advocacy service. As the numbers are so low there could be concerns we are not hearing the voice of the Child in Dorset. However, I have assurances through the work of the Corporate Parenting Board Sub Committee that we are hearing the voices loud and clear, and acting before things escalation unduly to formal complaints.

Year	Number of Complaints
Children in Care 2023-24	3
Children in Care 2022-23	10
Children in Care 2021-22	8
Children in Care 2020-21	15
Children in Care 2019-20	10

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Advocacy is described as supporting children to have their say and making sure their views and wishes are taken into consideration on decisions and matters that affect them, it is also about ensuring that rights are upheld. Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child sets out the right of children to be listened to in decisions which affect them.

There is a statutory duty to provide an independent advocacy service that supports children and young people to have their views and wishes taken into account when key decisions are being made about their lives.

An advocate can help if:

something needs to be started, changed or stopped, for example, if the child is unhappy about their treatment by children's social care or there are worries about plans being made, such as a move a child needs support during meetings to make sure their voice is heard children need advice and want to know their rights

a child needs support to make a complaint

In 2023-24 we have identified just the 3 cases that related to children in care, all via an advocate representing the voice of the child through the complaints process. You will note the figures are consistently low by comparison to the overall figures.

Children in Care (CIC)

In Q1 there were no CIC complaints, but 2 from last year are still with us as dialogue continues with advocacy around contact with a sibling, and the death of a parent in custody. Neither could be pursued through the complaints process, although 1 remains on our books and has had the benefit of an Investigating Officers views

In Q2 there were 2 CIC complaints, CW Fostering & housing, and AG relating to carehome and loss of money

In Q3 there was just 1 CIC complaint regarding incidents at a property and notice to leave. This was managed informally in the service without advocacy

In Q4 there were no complaints from CIC or advocacy

Compliance with timescales, and complaints resolved within extended timescale as agreed;

The table below show the majority of all Stage 1 cases for Children's Services Social Care were within the 20-day statutory timescale. A trend that is improving

Timescales	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
0-20 Working Days	86%	85%	77%
20+ days	14%	15%	23%

As always, closer observation reveals that some cases exceed the 20 days as a result of agreeing a more informal approach and resolution after the receipt of the original complaint, with good work from locality managers. This can include follow up calls and meetings, so the figure in isolation does not tell the whole story of the journey of the complaints.

learning and service improvement, including changes to services that have been implemented and details of any that have not been implemented;

Learning points are collected at all stages of the complaints procedure. At stage 1, Operational Managers identify learning from complaints and learning actions. At Stages 2 and 3, action plans are compiled based on the

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recommendations of the investigator's or panel chair's report. In addition, the LGSCO will include recommendations to remedy complaints, and actions are monitored by the complaints team to ensure that they are completed.

How we disseminate learning

Quarterly reports to Children's Services Leadership Team produced by the Complaints team

Dissemination of the quarterly report to Operational Managers to be discussed at Service Team Meetings.

The complaints team also feed into the performance data for SLT each quarter

How we learn from complaints

Improvement in Stage 1 responses - Additional Training to be provided to Team Managers on how to complete and present and stage one investigations, within statutory timescales. The Complaints Team Manager will be attending meetings to advise and update

Operational Managers to ensure that Team Managers and Social Workers are clear about the need to record meetings. Robust quality assurance processes put in place.

Improved use of complaints as a measure of performance and quality control:

Evidence of sharing of quarterly reports in QAudits and closing loop with service managers. Identifying trends early

Examples of learning from Complaints:

We have collected 31 really good quality and robust organisational learnings in 23-24, up from 28 last year which is really pleasing

Case ID	What we have learned from Complaints	What we have done as a result to improve practice
COM 4177 Chesil (DMc)	Ensure correct procedures are followed by social workers when seeking parental consent for any child and family assessments	Staff reminded via either email or Team meeting
COM/4636 (LW)		Social Worker recognises that four representatives from Dorset Council was not proportionate in a core group meeting will ensure this is considered in future.
COM/4714 (BL) ChAD	Documentation should have been updated and readily available to the duty workers and paperwork should have been provided Family felt pressurised into keeping the child and guilty for not keeping him longer. Both officers have reflected on why they may have portrayed themselves as frustrated due to the nature of the day	JUSTIFIED Managers from ChAD will be discussing this with Social Workers in the Locality Teams to ensure that files are regularly kept up to date as this paramount for emergency situations and to keep the child, foster carers and their families safe. Both officers have reflected on why they may have portrayed themselves as frustrated due to the nature of the day. This will be discussed and monitored in future supervisions with both workers.
COM/3472 Purbeck C SC (LW)	Manager identified learning for the organisation is the use of language, the phrase 'ticking boxes'.	General discussion held about complaints / communication at Team Meeting on 01.06.23.

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<p>COM/4816 + COM/4415 (linked) Fostering/CSC DMC/BL</p>		<p>JUSTIFIED Confirmation that incorrect car seat is no longer in use and removed from foster carer by social worker Review of all car seats has taken place - those that were inappropriate or incorrect have been removed and replaced All KiT workers have received briefing to confirm, remind and reinforce legal requirements in the safe transport of children Regular supervision of social workers taking place and HoS has requested that type of car seat is recorded within children's notes. All new team members will have induction which will include safety awareness Changes have been made and implemented as a direct result of this complaint</p>
<p>COM/4886 KBO</p>	<p>Child/young person should be returned to their parent/carer/ home address following a Social Work visit, unless alternative arrangement has been agreed with parent/carer.</p>	<p>Justified - Social Worker involved has reflected on the incident (with Team Manager oversight) to inform and improve future working practice.</p>
<p>COM/4876 C SC (NORTH) (LW)</p>	<p>Complainant did not receive the conference report in a timely way was justified. Manager to talk to mother to confirm any amendments she wishes to make to the information provided in previous assessments.</p>	<p>Manager stated they have learnt from this and will ensure complainant is in receipt of the report, ahead of the conference in October, within timescales. Manager to ensure that any comments made by mother are included in the children's chronology.</p>
<p>COM/4853 C SC (DORCHESTER AND WEST) (LW)</p>	<p>Redacting third party information in assessments where these are shared with different family members and understanding the impact that sharing very limited details can have on a family. The importance of young parents who are involved in private family law proceedings to have an advocate to support them</p>	<p>This has been discussed with the social worker involved. Manager has discussed with complainant and her daughter, creating a case study based on the daughter's experiences to share with the Court and CAFCASS so that this can be considered for other young people in the same situation.</p>
<p>COM5120 NORTH CSC INF REPS</p>	<p>SW should not enter property without express consent given</p>	<p>JUSTIFIED SW has reflected on actions and agrees this was inappropriate at the time SW will now call on mobile if no answer at door</p>
<p>COM 5084 NORTH DORSET CSC STAGE 1</p>	<p>Not everything was explained to the complainant</p>	<p>Addressed in individual supervision session Review of this within Children and Advice Service</p>

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	Complainant not supported by Children's Services throughout the process	
COM/5088 CWAD Stage 1	Unhappy with outcome of CIN assessment & Social Worker's involvement in the case	Service Manager is mindful of the need to work in partnership and harmony with the family, so whilst no fault has been found, they will provide a new worker
COM/5542 CIC Stage 1	It was not acceptable for CIC to move with belongings in black bags.	This has been raised with the whole team and apology given with assurance that suitcases will be provided in the future. Work is being carried out with Housing to raise the profile of joint strategy.
COM/5392 CSC EAST LOCAL Stage 1	Investigation has concluded that family have not received the standard of service that they should have and that on this occasion Dorset Council have not provided adequate help or support.	There are a number of learning points that Dorset will take from this complaint: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that children and parents have access to good quality support and help when there is domestic abuse within a household. • Ensuring that all children and parents are signposted to appropriate bereavement services. • Ensuring that children's records are updated and all information that is shared by parents is saved to children's records.
COM/4613 C SC – STAGE 2 CWAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complainant should be provided with clear confirmation in writing from Dorset Council Housing Solutions of their intention to provide a permanent housing arrangement that meets her child's needs. • To strengthen closer working relationships between Housing, Advice, Housing Solutions and Children's Services, they may wish to consider regular monthly meetings to review the current circumstances. • To strengthen a closer working relationship with complainant, Children's Services to consider more frequent Child in Need meetings to ensure that all professionals and complainant are kept fully up to date with any change in circumstances to 	<p>Housing Solutions has already written to S in line with this recommendation.</p> <p>The social work team and relevant colleagues in Housing met on Monday 7 August and will meet monthly thereafter. Manager from Housing Solutions agreed that complainant would be updated regularly.</p> <p>Eight-weekly Child in Need meetings have been arranged, to which complainant will be invited. Likewise, four-weekly Child in Need visits to child will be arranged. The focus of the Child in Need</p>

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	ensure that her daughter's needs are appropriately met.	planning will be on ensuring that complainant's child is well cared for and her needs prioritised
COM/5127 (LC)	Parent was unhappy about a statement made in the 'Manager's Comment' field of the minutes for an Early Help Team Around the Family (TAF) Meeting. The impact of the statement, shared with the ex-partner, has been to undermine and complicate the relationship with the ex-partner and that it has led to a break in the contact with the children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with our digital team to remove the statement in relation to Domestic Abuse from the children's record. • Write to the ex partner to inform her of the error, acknowledge what has happened, and provide an apology to her for any impact this misinformation created. • Contact the other attendees of the TAF meeting to make them aware that the information provided was incorrect. • Formally advise our Data Protection Team of the error. <p>There is wider learning for us as a Service. We need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider how we record sufficient relevant information on a child's record when there is a third party named. • Reflect upon the way that we record the rationale for our decisions to ensure that it remains robust, but with an awareness that it will be shared with parents. • Consider changing the way wording is imported from one part of a case record to another to allow for editing / changing by Locality managers where appropriate. • Question more rapidly and robustly when factual challenges are raised by parents about information we hold.
COM/5624 C SC Stage 1 (KBO)	Parent was unhappy with Social Worker's approach and how this left her feeling.	Follow-up emails will be sent after visits, bullet pointing what was discussed and any agreed actions to help improve the communication between parent and social worker.
COM/5542 C SC Stage 1 (LW)	<p>Care leaver not feeling listened too.</p> <p>Lack of appropriate accommodation.</p> <p>Clothing went missing during move due to lack of suitcases.</p> <p>Inappropriate sharing of personal information.</p>	<p>A learning event has been held with the team around these issues for this young person and others.</p> <p>Discussion to be had with Service Manager regarding sharing of information.</p>
COM/5513 C – INFORMAL (LW)	<p>No response from team to emails.</p> <p>\Promised once a month call did not take place with social worker</p>	<p>Manager has addressed this within the team and given updated advice and training on the importance of correspondence.</p> <p>.</p>

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		Manager has addressed this with the previous worker explaining the impact on complainant. The new worker is aware that agreed calls should take place. This learning was also part of the advice and training as addressed in the above point.
COM/5213 SEN (LC)	Parenting assessment was not sent to parent, who disagreed with some of its contents.	A social worker has visited the family to reassess the current situation and see what support Children's Services can offer.
COM/5154	Parent has not been routinely invited to CIC reviews.	Parent is to be invited to future reviews.
	This was a complaint made by a grandmother who felt that their daughter had been asked for information about her as part of a court ordered psychological assessment. Information about psychological assessments and what's involved being available to parents would be helpful.	Team manager to talk to the team about information being available to parents explaining the process of a court ordered psychological assessment helpful information can be found here: Psychological assessment (of an adult) - Family Rights Group (frg.org.uk)
COM/1855 (KR)	Concerns raised by grandparent regarding the lack of sibling contact and the siblings being separated in foster care.	Regular monthly sibling contact has been arranged and appropriate facetime contact in between is being considered.
COM/5358 (LC)	Data Breach: The Business support team undertake Box phish training. So unfortunately, this was human error with an email done in a rush. Learning is useful as it is a reminder to not fire off 'quick' emails (which this was) and take time to pause before sending. Fortunately, the impact of the data breach was low, but it has sent a warning to all of us to be ever more cautious and double check we have bcc'd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would like to know if it is possible to have a delay send on all our emails to give us at least 30 secs to stop an email if we know we have not bcc'd. • Ensure our whole team can learn about the potential consequences of such data breaches. • I have also suggested to Business support that it would be good to try and limit the number of emails we send out.
COM/4546 SEN (LW)	Improve the way SEN Team makes decisions about requests for alternative provision in the form of staff training or a briefing paper. As part of this, the Council will draw officers' attention to the Section 19 duties, accompanying statutory guidance and the LGSCO's focus report ' Out of School, Out of Sight? '	Manager has carried out this staff training and has arranged for presentation of the training to those who were on leave / out of the office.
COM/5963 CSC Business Support (LW/BL)		There is some learning that could have prevented the two further taxis. Had the service had a conversation with the taxi company in August 2023, in addition to checking that the bookings had been cancelled, the mistake on the part of the taxi company would have been identified earlier.

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		This learning will be shared with the KIT service to help prevent a re-occurrence. It is noted that the taxi company have sent their apologies for their error, and I would again extend my apologies for the distress you have experienced as a consequence of this error
COM/6084 C SC (LW)	There was a gap where children were not seen by a social worker, due to extremely urgent issues arising with another service user.	Manager has reminded the social worker of the importance of maintaining fortnightly visits.
COM 6230 C SC (DMc)	PA shared information with other professionals Minimal support available with supported accommodation	Staff reminded that they need to be clear what consent is given and no confusion Significant changes made to the level of support offered to their care leavers. Survey commissioned for all care leavers to help us understand what the Council are doing well and what needs changing
COM/5994	Although CHAD services acted in a manner to ensure Keira's immediate safety, the advice given to her to stay with her friend for the weekend should not have been issued without the consent of her parent(s)	Concerns have been shared with the service manager for CHAD and requested some additional training for staff.
COM/6317 (C SC) (LW)	The Manager and Social Worker discussed how to ensure that Families and Carers have our Duty and CHAD telephone numbers and email addresses, so that any important emails or calls are not missed.	As a result of this discussion, the Manager confirmed that each Social Worker will share with Families and Carers at Child in Care Reviews the CHAD and Duty contact details. The Manager aims to ensure that this action is completed by 1 March 2024.
COM/6475 CSC (BL)	There was drift within the service and communications/information were not consistent and lacking. We accept that communications should have been with both parents, as they share PR.	We acknowledged that during our intervention with the family the communication was not clear and fell below the expected standards. We have extended our apologies and TM has spoken directly with both family and SWs to ensure this practice does not continue
COM/5740 CSC (BL)	Partially upheld It is clear that there was some missed appointments and delayed documents within the context of a worker's illness absence and her subsequent decision to leave the local authority.	We acknowledge concerns around the comments recorded within the minutes of the review child protection conference which suggest some bias on the part of the social worker. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will try to ensure communication is delivered in a timelier manner • Apology offered for distress caused • There was delay to filing court order, but this does not indicate a lack of support from the SW to the family • By the nature of a split meeting, information shared pertains to the children and predominantly to the parent that is in the meeting at the time. It is important to

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		<p>read this document with that context in mind. That said, it is important that information shared is evidenced based and avoids value judgements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apology offered for missed meeting - this was an unforeseen error; however, children have since been discussed at core meeting + conference. • New SW allocated to children with positive open dialogue • Explanation that conversation held outside of CSC remit, however concerns raised will be flagged with XX. Note that issue may have already been addressed further to positive work recorded on file
COM/6411 (C SC) (LC)	Although Social Workers and managers are trained in the importance of including both resident and non-resident parents at every stage of involvement, this doesn't always happen.	Manager to ensure, through 1-2-1 supervision and case oversight, that social workers are inclusive and, at point of closure being agree, both resident and non-resident parents are given an opportunity to have their views and input heard.
COM/6204 (C SC)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parent did not feel they had been listened to nor the context of their family's individual situation had been considered. 2. Delay in delivering the highchair. 3. The OT identified that the seat was not as had been assessed or quoted for. We suspected at that point that the order may have been inadvertently mixed up prior to delivery and attempts were made to rectify this. 	<p>The team will consider how they obtain additional information, for example, it may be a better option to arrange a face-to-face discussion to allow for a conversation, and an opportunity to explain why the panel made the recommendations to the family worker.</p> <p>Despite the Occupational Therapist (OT) chasing our equipment services on numerous occasions, the chair was not delivered until September.</p> <p>The length of time taken to resolve the seating was inexcusably. The Occupational Therapist did everything to try and get the issue resolved as quickly as possible. Despite raising this with our equipment service, no explanation has been offered. The manager of the Occupational Therapy service is continuing to follow this up with them to ensure that it does not occur again.</p>

Sharing Information

Professionals need to ensure they have explicit permission to share information, either through statutory guidance or with the consent of the children and family involved. This includes when sharing information with other family members.

Maintaining confidentiality within a family is complex and checks should always be made of the records to confirm what can and cannot be shared with each family member. A handover of key information between practitioners and their managers in respect of any changes in family's circumstances should take place after periods of absence to ensure clarity about what has happened and what information can be shared with whom.

Data Protection and Appropriate Action to take

Managers need to contact Data Protection Team as soon as possible following a potential breach to seek advice about immediate actions to mitigate risk and distress to the family. When aware that a data breach has occurred, advice must be obtained from the Data Protection Team about immediate actions required. Information on how to report a data breach can be found at <https://intranet.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/task/report-a-data-breach/> Unless advised

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otherwise, contact should be made with the family to alert them to the breach and to provide apologies, reassurance and information about what the service will be doing to rectify the situation and mitigate the risks.

Safeguarding, the Legal Framework and Good Practice

Reference Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.

A summary of statistical data about the age, gender, disability, sexual orientation and ethnicity of complainants

All complainants to Dorset Council are sent an equality and diversity monitoring form as part of the complaint process. Complainants are asked to complete this form but it is completely voluntary. This year we had a 70% uptake. The percentages are based on those who completed the form only and not specific to Children's Services as they are anonymous

	2023-24	2022-23
Gender		
Female	52%	50%
Male	32%	33%
Self described or non binary	1%	1%
Prefer not to say or left blank	15%	16%
Sexuality		
Heterosexual	66%	67%
Gay Man	1%	1%
Bisexual	2%	2%
Prefer not to say (selected)	17%	14%
Gay Woman/Lesbian	1%	2%
Left Blank	13%	14%
Age		
16-24	4%	4%
25-34	12%	11%
35-44	17%	15%
45-54	17%	16%
55-64	18%	17%
65-74	13%	17%
75 & Older	7%	6%
Left blank	12%	14%
Religion		
Atheist	3%	2%
Buddist	1%	0%
Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and other Christian denominations)	30%	30%
Hindu	0%	0%
Jewish	0%	0%
Muslim	0%	0%
None/no religion	35%	36%
Other	3%	2%
Prefer not to say (selected)	12%	12%
Left Blank	28%	28%
Ethnicity		

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Asian or Asian British - Indian	0%	0%
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0%	0%
Black or Black British - African	0%	0%
Black or Black British - Caribbean	0%	0%
Mixed Ethnic Background - Other White background	0%	0%
Mixed Ethnic Background - White and Asian	0%	0%
Mixed Ethnic Background - White and Black African	0%	0%
Mixed Ethnic Background - White and Black Caribbean	0%	0%
Not known	0%	0%
Prefer not to say	4%	4%
Traveller of Irish Heritage	0%	0%
White - British	74%	70%
White - Gypsy or Traveller	0%	0%
White - Irish	0%	0%
White - Other White background	0%	0%
Other	2%	2%
Left Blank	2%	24%
Disability		
Mental Health, Learning Difficulty/Sensory	2%	0%
Mental Health Long Term	4%	2%
Mental Health - Unspecified	4%	2%
Physical Disability - Long Term	2%	4%
Physical Disability - Unspecified	5%	6%

A review of the effectiveness of the complaints procedure

The Complaints Team send out forms to gather feedback from complainants about their experience of complaining in order to continually improve the service. Regrettably there has been very little uptake on this and there is no reportable data of any value established.

Compliments

Finally we are happy to advise that Childrens services received 111 compliments in 23-24 so genuinely heartening to see

The positive sentiments and hope it presents more of a balanced critique of the service

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Appendices

Adult's Service Statutory Reporting Requirements

We hope the Infographic provides key information at a glance in a format that allows the Quarters to be directly compared. We include the specific the number of complaints and the manner in which they were considered. We have specified the number of complaints which were justified, and the number referred to the Ombudsman. Complaints should be regarded as an important tool and be performance monitored to ensure the Council can evidence that we are a learning organisation. Compliments should also be valued and communicated effectively to staff. Good practice and learning should be disseminated. These are feedback as soon as we receive them and are highlighted in internal quarterly reporting

Complaint Numbers

The Corporate Complaints Team happy to report a decrease in complaints in 2023-24 compared to the previous year

We suspected that there may be other complaints coming into the authority via other routes (MPs or to the Chief Executive) that may be are missing the process. We are implementing new protocols to ensure a single point of entry for complaints

Directorate	2023-24	2022-23	%
Adult Social Care	126	143	-13%
Adult Non Social care	126	138	-9%

Complaint Themes and Subject matter

We report on the following themes, shown below by Quarter

Q1

Service Provision / Quality of Service	13
Disagreement with Decision	7
Finance	3
Customer Service	1
Communication	2
Other	2

Q2

Service Provision / Quality of Service	13
Disagreement with Decision	5
Finance	3
Customer Service	3
Communication	3
Other	0

Q3

Service Provision / Quality of Service	16
Disagreement with Decision	9
Finance	3
Customer Service	4
Communication	2

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Other	2
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Q4

Service Provision / Quality of Service	15
Disagreement with Decision	11
Finance	1
Customer Service	4
Communication	1
Other	0

Learning from Complaints

Dorset Council have collected 20 learning points from 2023-24, a decrease from the 28 in the previous year, with a sampling below:

CASE	What we have Learned	What we have done
COM/4826 (TB)	There was a gap in the two-way communication and understanding which was unrelated to the cost of care.	<p>Manager discussed with social worker and explored and agreed learning around the following;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To summarise what was agreed at any future meetings and send this out to those involved for clarity. 2. To organise follow-up calls and to check in with relevant parties and evaluate progress. 3. To instil methods to maintain these and adhere to them as good practice standards.
COM 4516 (DMc)	Communication during assessment process could be clearer to ensure the completion of assessments are transparent	CHC Hub to review communication throughout the assessment process and confirm good practice
COM/4221 (LC)		As a conclusion, I think your complaint is partially justified, the garage was entered and the mobile hoist brought through into the home causing distress to both your parents, however these events could have been avoidable given that various OT's on duty covering the previous 2 weeks had requested that the hoist be moved into the home. ***** regrets entering the garage to locate the hoist and will not do so again in similar circumstances. We have allocated the case to an alternative Occupational Therapist and your family will not have to work with ***** going forward.
COM/4896 (LW) (A SC)	Alongside the Major Adaptation Panel we hold for funding, we hold a complex case panel where there is conflict of opinion between staff and families so we can look at the issues across the service before they escalate.	Manager will be taking this recommendation back to the Housing Standards Team, Adult Social Care service and Commission service as well as our contract provider.

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COM/4862 (A SC – Purbeck) (LW)	Social Worker did not follow Dorset Council policies in relation to the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) or follow best practice when assessing care needs.	Manger will discuss the concerns raised with the Social Worker and ensure that she undertakes further training in relation to completing Mental Capacity Act Assessments, understanding the DoLS procedures and legal requirements and further development in assessing under the Care Act.
COM/4911 A SC North (BL)	Breakdown in clear communication between Service User, Social Worker and Medica Professional Unnecessary distressed caused	PARTIALLY JUSTIFIED In order to adopt a more positive relationship between service user and Dorset Council, decision has been made to end Social Worker's involvement and if necessary, transfer case to another SW should further support or work be needed. If there are no further concerns raised by Safeguarding teams and all parties are satisfied and happy, then service users request for referral will be ended with no further action.
COM/4626 A WA Housing Solutions (BL)		Goodwill gesture made £549.13
COM/4571 A SC (LW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We did not communicate effectively after we received the first complaint. • There was a void of time before the Locality Manager picked up the complaint when the previous person responded left Dorset Council. • We did not effectively keep the complainant updated with the progress of the complaint. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Specialist Services feels he should have been more proactive in offering an apology, when staff member left and has taken this learning on board. • Head of Specialist Services has reminded the team that, if someone has attended a meeting, they should be sent a copy of notes / minutes.
COM/3651 A WA Housing (LC)	Confusion and poor communication regarding when complainant's mother had started paying for her accommodation.	In recognition of DC's part in this, we have agreed not to pursue outstanding fees.
COM5414 Financial Assessment (BL)	Consideration of all information available before coming to a decision.	Discussion with team re ensuring all appropriate information has been gathered. Action completed 01 Sept'23

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COM/5070 Housing (LC)	Email sent to both parties using cc function resulted in a minor breach of the tenants data.	<p>Manager has spoken directly to the officer responsible and her manager - it was a genuine error. She is aware of the use of CC and BCC in emails. Email guidance has been issued to all officers in Housing Standards about the use of BCC and CC on emails. Use of BCC and CC was discussed at a team meeting</p> <p>Reminder emails to the Housing Standards team about the issue and use of BCC and CC have since been sent.</p>
COM/5922 (BL) ASC Safeguarding	<p>Partial justification</p> <p>We need to be clear in our dealings with service users when discussing matters over the telephone and when we are not in an office environment – this can help to minimise any misunderstanding or confusion</p> <p>The provider and Registered Manager should have advised of the current situation at the home, enabling the complainant time to consider whether the placement was suitable. As the CQC are the regulator it is their responsibility to ensure that Providers exert their duty in this respect.</p> <p>Dorset Council acknowledges actions regarding the care home as being too late given the complainants experiences, however the circumstances around the complaint have had an impact and are contributing to learning across the system to help ensure that other people and families in similar circumstances do not have the same experience.</p>	<p>Team discussion to ensure noise during phone calls is minimised or an explanation is provided to ensure this is not misconstrued in future.</p> <p>We have reissued guidance to all providers about the identification and management of contractures. This is to ensure that these are prevented from developing, and that the manual handling of any person with a contracture is managed carefully to reduce the person experiencing pain and any further reduction in mobility.</p> <p>As part of NHS England (enhanced health in care homes programme) work has been initiated to improve the quality of, and access to, healthcare advice and support in care home settings.</p> <p>Dorset Council are now awaiting final decision from the NMC</p>
COM/5853 (KR) ASC	When a staff member is off sick we need to ensure we check promptly what appointments they have on the day and make contact in a timely manner to cancel/rearrange, hopefully limiting the impact on the clients	Manager to discuss with Management colleagues in the team to ensure there is a robust process in place for this
COM/5981 A SC (BL)		Considering the individual circumstances XXXX, their age and recognising the changes in their health condition, I have decided to make a

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		<p>compassionate decision for her to remain at XXXX and be funded by Dorset Council.</p> <p>We confirm that we will be backdating this award to the date their funding fell below the threshold as advised by the latest financial assessment.</p>
COM/5226 A SC (BL)	Though SW acted in the best interests (re safeguarding concerns) the intervention was misplaced as they did not consult the LPoA's	<p>We will be taking forward some refresher training for teams around working with people who have LPOA's and decision making.</p> <p>Fee's will be reimbursed (£2,600)</p>
COM 6239 A SC (BL)	Social Worker used inappropriate language when speaking to complainant	Social Worker apologised and matter discussed in supervision
COM/6344 ASC – LC	Best Value search was requested within 4 months of previous search moving a placement from temporary to perm. Feedback from brokerage was that this was not necessary and a desktop review of market was sufficient.	Improvements in process between Brokerage and Ops around use of BVS. This will be linked into the brokerage development workstream of transformation.
COM/6242 ASC – KR	Customer felt the duty worker lacked empathy towards situation	As a learning point, I will ensure that they reflect on how they ask questions and also how they offer advice on alternative provisions that may have already been tried
COM/5654 A SC (LW)	<p>The Council will review its response to the safeguarding concern and consider what different steps it should have taken.</p> <p>The Council will also review the way it monitors safeguarding training within the care providers it commissions.</p>	<p>The Safeguarding Team should have considered progressing the concern to a section 42 (2) enquiry, this would have been the appropriate response to the concerns raised to allow a full review to have taken place. Further training has taken place within the service, and we have now incorporated an authorisation process at each stage of the safeguarding process.</p> <p>Reminder sent to team by manager stating:</p> <p>Please ensure you always triangulate the information you monitor during the visits ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You check the provider's policies and procedures and that they have a copy of Dorset's Safeguarding policies in place. • Ensure the provider is aware that they must report all safeguarding concerns including those that may relate to another provider or health & social care organisation. • Training records demonstrate all staff have received safeguarding training and that the provider assesses staff understanding through supervision and that refresher training is available.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any incidents identified within care records and supporting documentation that you identify as a safeguarding concern are followed up with the provider to ensure an appropriate safeguarding alert has been raised with the Safeguarding Triage Team. <p>Also discussed at team meeting.</p>
COM 6394 ASC (KR)	Dealing with complex conversations on the telephone phone, particularly specialised needs	Discussions with duty worker and consider any training and learning to support duty role

LGSCO Findings

The Ombudsman reported 33 UPHELD cases across Dorset Council as a whole authority. Of these only 7 were related to Adult Services, as the lions share (21 of 33) in SEND.

As a percentage it would read as a big increase on 22-23 as only 4 were upheld that year, but across 23-24 as a figure the impact does not present too much of a concern. What is new is the financial remedies being requested from the directorate with the Ombudsman's findings cost you £2000 in remedies over 6 of the 7 cases. Small figures but in virtually all cases

We should observe that a decrease in complaints, but an increase in LGSCO findings and remedies is not ideal, but we are a learning authority and welcome the independent views and findings.

Dorset Council met the recommendations in 100% of these cases. The cases and outcomes are captured below:

Reference	Complaint in Brief	Service improvement recommendations
22005228	Summary: Mrs X complained the Council charged her mother, Mrs Y, for care without providing information and without getting her consent. Mrs X says this caused the family distress when they received the bill.	Issue guidance to relevant staff on the importance of providing information about financial implications before an individual becomes liable for costs.
22010334	Mr X (as I shall call him) complains that the Council failed to take seriously the financial safeguarding concerns he raised about his wife's father (Mr R). In particular he complains the Council's actions in visiting Mr R have exacerbated the situation between them. He also complains the Council has not properly responded to his complaint.	Within one month of my final decision the Council will apologise to Mr X for failing to provide a response to his complaint and offer the sum of £300 in acknowledgement of the injustice caused. The Council should provide us with evidence it has complied with the above actions.

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22014842	<p>The Council incorrectly required Miss X to fund her personal assistant and made that decision without notifying her or her mother, who is her representative. Although it advised her to apply for her specific food and exercise needs as disability-related expenditure, it has since refused to accept them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miss X has already accumulated a £4,000 bill for unpaid care costs which she cannot repay. This has already had a negative impact on Miss X's health and that of her mother, who acts as her representative. Without funding for her personal assistant, Miss X's wellbeing and independence will suffer further, particularly as her mother is now living abroad. 	<p>The Council will take the following action within one month of my final decision to provide a suitable remedy:</p> <p>a) provide a written apology to Mrs C and Miss X for the avoidable uncertainty and inconvenience caused by the errors in the financial assessment process identified above; and b) make a symbolic payment of £150 each to both Mrs C and Miss X to acknowledge their avoidable uncertainty and inconvenience (the Council should not offset these payments against any outstanding debt).</p> <p>34. We publish guidance on remedies which sets out our expectations for how organisations should apologise effectively to remedy injustice. The organisation should consider this guidance in making the apology I have recommended in my findings.</p> <p>35. The Council should provide us with evidence it has complied with the above actions.</p>
22014884	<p>carers from a care provider commissioned by the Council verbally abused, neglected and traumatised her;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the care provider commissioned by the Council withdrew care without notice; and • the Council delayed putting in place a new care package. 	<p>I am satisfied the procedural measures the Council has undertaken are appropriate and should hopefully prevent similar problems occurring in future. I consider though Ms X has suffered an injustice as she was caused distress at having the care package removed without notice and the carers did not always carry out the actions required in the care plan. Ms X is also left with some uncertainty about whether the situation could have been improved if the Council had followed the right procedure. As remedy for that I recommended the Council apologise to Ms X and pay her £300. The Council has agreed to my recommendation</p>

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23007466	<p>Mrs X (as I shall call her) complains the Council failed to take seriously the concerns she reported in June 2022 about her elderly mother Mrs A. She says it was not until February 2023 when she saw some meeting notes from November 2022, that she realised that a safeguarding alert should have been raised. She says as a result Mrs A was suffering unauthorised restraint for some months.</p>	<p>Within one month of my final decision the Council will review its response to the safeguarding concern raised in June 2022 and consider what different steps it should have taken then;</p> <p>31. The Council acknowledges that its failure to investigate critically at that point caused injustice both to Mrs A and to Mrs X;</p> <p>32. Within one month of my final decision the Council will apologise to Mrs X specifically for its failure at that point, and offer her £500 for the distress caused by its poor service;</p> <p>33. Within one month of my final decision, the Council will also review the way it monitors safeguarding training within the care providers it commissions. The Council should provide us with evidence it has complied with the above actions.</p>
23009113	<p>Mr X complained about the Council's handling of the bathroom work carried out under his disabled facilities grant application.</p>	<p>The Council failed to communicate with Mr X while acting as his agent with the contractor. The Council will apologise and pay Mr X £100 to recognise the distress caused.</p>
22000568	<p>Mr B complained about a Hospital Trust's decision to discharge his late father, Mr G, home from hospital in October 2020. He also complained about the community health and social care support provided to his father by a Community Trust and the Council</p>	<p>support provided to his father by a Community Trust and the Council.</p> <p>We did not find evidence of fault in the actions of the Community Trust. There was fault in the way the Hospital Trust and the Council dealt with Mr G's discharge arrangements including how they considered the impact of the caring role on Mrs G, his wife. The Hospital Trust and the Council have agreed to our recommendations and will apologise to Mr B and Mrs G. They will also make a symbolic payment of £250 each to Mrs G to acknowledge the adverse impact the faults had on her.</p>
		<p>£2000 in Financial Remedies</p>

People and Health Scrutiny Committee

14 November 2024

Cost of Living Challenge Update

For Review and Consultation

Cabinet Member and Portfolio:

Cllr R Hope, Customer, Culture and Community Engagement

Executive Director:

A Dunn, Executive Director, Corporate Development

Report Author: Laura Cornette

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Report Status: Public

Brief Summary: This paper provides an update on the Cost-of-Living projects recommended for agreement by the Place and Resources Overview Committee (which members of the People and Health Overview committee were also in attendance for) on 11 July 2024.

Recommendation:

1. That members review and comment on the progress of the £2 million investment in preventative and reactive spend agreed in July 2024.
2. Note that government has recently announced that extension of the Household Support Fund to 2025/26.
3. Note that £1.5m of the cost of living fund has been committed so far and that no further commitments are intended to be made at this stage whilst the impact of the Household Support Funding is assessed. If necessary, the balance of the £0.5m cost of living fund can be transferred into next financial year.

Reason for Recommendation:

1. It was requested by the Place and Resources Overview Committee that quarterly project updates were brought to People and Health Scrutiny Committee.
2. The purpose of the Cost-of-Living fund, financed from the Council's reserves is to fill the gaps in other national support. Projects were costed at approximately £1.5

million to allow for emerging trends and policy from the Government in the Autumn and Winter.

3. **Background**

- 3.1 The Dorset Together: Cost-of-Living programme was created in 2022 in response to the rising cost of living and the financial impact of this on Dorset residents.
- 3.2 In the last financial year, a budget of £2 million from reserves was allocated to a series of projects which addressed gaps in the national provision of support. In June 2024 Cabinet agreed up to a further £2 million to continue to support residents with the ongoing impacts. Proposed projects were discussed at Place and Resources Overview Committee in July with delegated sign off given to the Executive Director for Corporate Development (S151) and the Cabinet Member for Customer, Culture and Community Engagement.
- 3.3 A full background of the programme to date can be found in the **background papers**.
- 3.4 A list of all originally requested projects with recommendations following Place and Resources Overview Committee for 24-25 can be found in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.5 Following the recommendations on 11 July, using the agreed member delegated authority, the Executive Director for Corporate Development (S151) and the Cabinet Member for Customer, Culture and Community Engagement agreed to support 14 of the proposed 17 projects. Progress on all projects are projects are in item 2 below.

2. Agreed Project Progress and Budget Update

2.1 The below table displays the individual agreed project progress and the budget spend to 31 October 2024.

Project no.	Project Title	Budget Amount agreed	Spend as at 31 October 24	Progress Report
1	Homelessness Support	£177,500	£177,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and Awareness Campaign: Launched in July, it increased calls to our Housing Options team by 18% over the last 3 months compared to the same period last year. This early intervention helps improve outcomes for those starting to struggle. • Financial Support: Since April 1 2024, 120 households received financial aid to prevent homelessness or secure new housing through arrears payments, rent in advance, and deposits. • Supermarket Vouchers (April 1 - August 31, 2024): £20,000 worth of vouchers were distributed to 316 households in hardship, including 155 with children and 23 pension-age households. • Supermarket Vouchers (Since September 1, 2024): £1,675 worth of vouchers were given to 31 households in hardship.
2	Healthy Homes Dorset scheme	£200,000	£200,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ridgewater Energy, our delivery partner are currently in the project cycle of raising awareness, handling enquiries and conducting surveys to assess eligibility. • Focus on Park Homes: We are focusing on Park Homes, which often miss out on funding and house vulnerable residents. • Current Work: Improvement works are underway for 35 Park Homes, costing around £4,000 each, totalling £117,000. These homes are mostly in highly deprived areas of Portland, Weymouth, and Alderholt.

3	Citizens Advice – CoL Caseworkers	£214,489	£107,489	<p>1 August to 28 October 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our (2 FTE) Dorset Energy Unit energy caseworkers have supported the residents across the council area with their energy problems. They have helped to deal with off-grid customers struggling when preparing for winter, dealt with energy supply problems and given specialist support to improve efficiency and save money for our clients. • Our (1.5 FTE) Cost of Living outreach caseworkers have delivered advice in a targeted way for the areas of greatest deprivation, including providing home visits for those unable to access our service due to disability or age. They work in the Blandford, Gillingham and Bridport areas delivering advice that maximises income and solves welfare benefits and debt problems. They continue their partnership with others such as Blandford Town Council to deliver the service. • The funding for advice session supervisors has continued to support 250 volunteers in their delivery of service for Dorset residents. <p>Key statistics: our COL caseworkers have helped a total of 219 clients deal with 593 issues and achieved income gains of £253,778</p>
4	Discretionary Housing Payment Allowance.	£100,000	£0	Draw down will begin in Q4 once the statutory funding has been exhausted.
5	Disabilities Facilities Grant	£150,000	£150,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Energy Improvement Grant is using £150,000 of cost-of-living crisis funding. The grant is designed to enable homeowners with a disability to quickly access

				<p>financial assistance to conduct a wide range of energy improvements around the home. Funding is made available through the Dorset Accessible Homes Service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So far 24-25 CoL project 10 grants have been given (Q2 24/25) totalling £40,229.
7	Emergency and affordable food security	£100,000	£0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not yet allocated due to the Autumn round being covered by Government-funded Household Support Fund • Work has been ongoing with food projects to develop robust referral mechanisms to ensure residents who use those projects have access to wraparound support as needed. • A targeted grant programme will open in November 2024.
8 Page 83	Sustainable and affordable food security projects	£75,000	£34,970	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for Community Cooking and Skills courses – Park Community Centre, Weymouth (Friendly Food Club £12,420) - will be aimed at young families and timed after school drop off with the aim to cook and share a meal at the end of the session. The venue is currently setting up a community fridge to enable surplus food to be distributed which will be available to those who attend. • Community Teaching Kitchen (Tumbledown, Weymouth £10,000) - can offer cooking lessons to children and families, school children, young people not attending school, and any other groups who may benefit from attending such sessions at Tumbledown. They are aiming to teach people to cook healthy fresh food on budgets, with one member of staff being a domestic science teacher and three volunteers trained by the Friendly Food Club to provide such cooking sessions. The kitchen will also be used for processing produce from the farm into chutneys, pickles and jams, with

				<p>members and volunteers all involved in the whole operation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Food Hygiene Certificate via virtual college distributed by Volunteer Centre Dorset (£5,050) • Cooking Kits for community groups x 10 - the barrier of lack of equipment has been identified in terms of set up – the kits would be sited across the county in community venues and be available to borrow by groups wishing to offer community cooking opportunities such as shared lunches etc. (£7,500) • Under development – we are working with groups hoping to restart some community lunch clubs for older people in East and North Dorset which were not continued after Covid.
9	Targeted means tested energy support HSF referral scheme	£100,000	£0	Following the Government’s announcement in the Autumn Budget to extend the HSF, this may now be covered from this fund – awaiting confirmation at time of report writing. Verbal update to be given at meeting.
10	Targeted programme for Cost-of-Living advice, support and anti-scams for vulnerable residents with learning disabilities.	£25,000	£25,000	<p>People First Dorset</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 sessions (6 Weymouth, 4 Dorchester, 2 online) reached 93 adults with learning disabilities. • Topics: budgeting, digital safety, health, and emotional wellbeing. • Survey of 55 members: 73% struggle financially, 76% worry about scams, 87% feel socially isolated, 42% find it hard to get out, 78% want more focused workshops, 20% struggled to answer. • 2025 plan: Smaller, targeted workshops based on identified needs
11	Support for older residents benefit applications	£75,000	£60,000	Budget increased from £50,000 to support the emergent Pension Credit application campaign (making them eligible

				for winter fuel allowance). Supported by Citizens Advice for complex cases Project update detail in section 3
12	Helping Hands programme	£50,000	£25,000	<p>Island Community Action (ICA) - 1 September- 31 October</p> <p>The project provided 510 at-home and 1,691 out-of-home interactions through over 20 services and activities. They collaborated with various organisations to improve referral and support systems related to the cost-of-living crisis, covering areas like Carers, Finance, Food, Home Safety and Transport.</p> <p>The project includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At Home: Befriending, Food Bank referrals, Good Neighbour errands, and telephone check-ins. • Out of Home: Community Crafters, club activities, food-based activities, social activities, transport for essential appointments and shopping support. • ICA have created a new collaborative approach to supporting and referring those in need of support related to the cost-of-living crisis. This has included working with Citizens Advice Bureau (via Energy Bus), Christians Against Poverty, Age UK (related to the Household Support Fund), local Food Banks and Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue and plan further partnership discussions to support older and vulnerable residents. • An updated A to Z Directory has been created to cover relevant subjects, and ICA continues to take a holistic approach to client support.

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICA will provide benefits application (project 11) for older residents of Portland as part of this grant award.
13	Village/community hall/community spaces CoL sustainability.	£30,000	£30,000	Sessions have been delivered on marketing, policy development and budgeting and resources have been developed such as template policies, ACRE* information sheets and other resources (*Action with Communities in rural England)
14	Community Transport Network	£100,000	£0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the recent investment from the HSF in local community transport, several community schemes have identified the need for further funding. Applicants will be able to apply for up to £10,000 for capital projects with 20% match funding and/or up to £5,000 for revenue (no match funding required) Fund will be opened and application via Dorset Council website by mid November 2024. Applications will be sent to the local Town/Parish representative for comment and the panel will allocate funding in Q4 on a case-by-case basis.
15	Customer Services Digital inclusion device loan scheme	£10,000	£10,000	<p>10 further iPads as part of our iPad lending scheme-representing a 33% increase.</p> <p>The additional devices enable us to improve our digital inclusion offer across the Dorset Council area. Previously customers were only able to borrow an iPad from one of seven designated libraries (with 30 devices available). The additional funding means an iPad can now be borrowed from any one of our 23 council run libraries. The new devices will be available for loan from 1 November.</p> <p>We are working with communications colleagues to develop a marketing campaign to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> improve our partnership and stakeholder messaging about the new offer

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> improve our reach to digitally excluded groups through an outreach visit programme. <p>Impact data will be collected via a customer survey instigated on return of the device – reporting will be available for the next scrutiny date.</p>
16	Children's Services 4 targeted priority programmes that support low-income families	£100,000	£0	Following the Government's announcement to extend the HSF, this may now be partially/fully covered from this fund – awaiting confirmation at time of report writing. Verbal update to be given at meeting.
	Total	Awarded £1,506,989	Spend to date £819,959	

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2.2 The below table gives project updates for the 3 projects that were recommended as tentative or declined following the Place and Resources Overview committee on 11th July 2024.

Project no.	Project Title	Budget Amount Requested	Progress report
6	Invest in Lendology	£50,000	On 7 th July members of the Place and Resources Overview were not familiar with the Lendology scheme and requested that a separate paper be presented at Scrutiny and that a recommendation would be made on progression of this project. The paper was presented by the Service Manager for Housing Standards at People and Health Overview committee as part of the Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy paper on Tuesday 29 October. The updated policy was supported by members of the overview committee and recommended for Cabinet sign off.

			The lead Cabinet Member and Executive Director for Corporate Development (S151) will review the minutes and recording of the paper, and I will give a further verbal update at the meeting.
11	Age UK NSW	£50,000	An update is detailed in part 3 of this paper.
17	Digital Place	£150,000	<p>The Overview committee did not agree this should be categorised under the cost of living as it is a business as usual project for Dorset Council. It was recommended that it should be considered under a sustainability or economic regeneration budget.</p> <p>The lead Cabinet Member and Executive Director for Corporate Development (S151) agreed with this recommendation and this project will not be progressed as part of the cost of living programme.</p>

2.3 Overall the cost-of-living support programme is on track to deliver the agreed projects within the agreed timeframe. With the very recent extension announcement of the HSF in the national Government's budget, there may be some adjustments to how the projects are funded. The cost of living programme was designed to fill in the gaps in other funded programmes so with the change in national government there was always going to be a degree of movement for this.

2.4 As the impact of the new Government's budget announcement on the cost of living for Dorset's residents becomes clearer, we will continue look to find any new gaps or emerging trends identified in our data and intelligence from our VCSOs and frontline staff to create further support projects.

2.5 Full monitoring and statistical impacts of the funding will be provided in the report provided to People and Health Scrutiny Committee in April 2025.

2.6 As agreed at Overview committee in July 2024, further allocation of support is being made to support Dorset's most vulnerable residents with cost-of-living projects in the next financial year budget development.

3. Support for applications for Pension Credit

3.1 At the Place & Resources Overview committee, it had been recommended that the original project request to offer Age UK North, South and West Dorset £50,000 (no. 11) to support older peoples benefit claimant applications be separated out to geographical locations and that a fund is developed to for local organisations already undertaking this work be able to apply in to.

3.2 Following the national government announcement in September that the winter fuel payment was only for residents on pension credit, we took the decision that this fund would have a primary focus on targeted support for older people to complete applications for Pension Credit and other related older people benefits.

3.3 Due to potential underspend on other cost of living projects and the emergent deadline of 21 December to apply for Pension Credit to be eligible for this year's winter fuel allowance, it was authorised to increase the total value of this funding to £75,000.

3.4 Citizens Advice agreed to offer a 'one day benefits first aid' course to support any local organisations who would like some guidance for their volunteers and staff to support this activity to ensure as many eligible residents as possible have their application approved first time.

3.5 In addition to the support funded from the Cost of Living programme, Dorset Council has undertaken a full marketing campaign aimed at older residents and their families to encourage them to apply for pension credit where eligible or to access alternative support from partner organisations.

3.6 This is a list of the organisations who were awarded the funding from the fund.

Organisation	Location/Target residents	Amount
Age Concern North Dorset	Sturminster Newton, Gillingham, Shaftesbury and surrounding villages and hamlets	£7,000
The Lantern Trust	Weymouth, Chickerell, Dorchester & surrounding villages	£10,000
Age UK Bournemouth,	East Dorset including Ferndown, West Moors, Wimborne, St Leonards and St Ives, Blandford,	£10,000

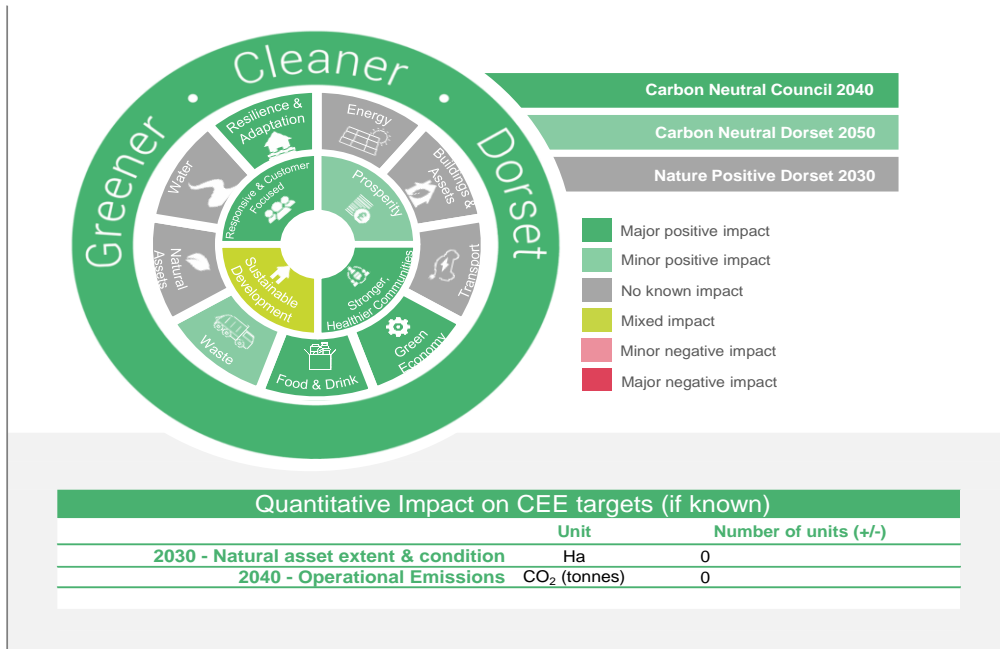
Poole & East Dorset	Corfe Mullen and surrounding villages	
Age UK North, South & West Dorset	Dorchester and surrounding villages– Weymouth, Chickerell, Chesil coast villages area - Bridport, Lyme Regis area, Beaminster and Broadwindsor, Sherborne, Sturminster Newton, Blandford, Gillingham, Shaftesbury, Wareham, Swanage, Lychett Matravers	£35,000
Ferndown Community Support CIC	Ferndown, Verwood and adjoining areas	£3,000
The YOU Trust	Across the Dorset Council area focus on hospital discharge of older people	£10,000
Total		£75,000
Island Community Action	Portland	NA – included in their separate Cost of living grant

4. **Financial Implications**

Cabinet agreed that up to £2m can be utilised from council reserves to support this programme in this financial year. Current commitment totals at £1,506,989m. In light of the announcement by the Government in the Autumn budget to extend the Household Support Fund, we are proposing that the expenditure this financial year sticks to the current commitment of £1,506,989m.

Cabinet agreed that future financial support of cost of living will be considered as part of the annual budget setting process, not part of general reserves.

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



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	major positive impact
Waste	minor positive impact
Natural Assets & Ecology	No known impact
Water	No known impact
Resilience and Adaptation	major positive impact

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

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

This programme of activities has been designed to positively support the well-being and health of Dorset Council's residents.

7. **Risk Assessment**

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

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Medium

Although the previous £2 million has achieved its purpose and has significantly supported our vulnerable residents to weather the cost-of-living challenge, the challenge has not ended. Emerging trends throughout 23-24 have shown that housing issues became more prevalent.

The Government reduced the winter fuel allowance to households on pension credit only. Dorset has the highest population of older residents in the country, many of them fall just outside of these criteria but will struggle to pay their fuel bills this winter. In mitigation, Dorset Council has made provision for those residents affected with targeted support projects from the HSF and this fund alongside a full marketing campaign and support from VCS partners.

The financial provision from the Government has been extended for Household Support Fund (HSF) for 2025/26. This fund supports many vulnerable people including paying for free school meal vouchers in the school holidays, supermarket vouchers (to support with increased energy prices), and grants to foodbanks and social supermarkets.

8. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

Proposals for the Cost-of-Living Challenge programme of activities continue to target our most vulnerable residents. Means testing is used where possible to ensure the additional funding reaches those in greatest need.

In March 2023, our data and insights team undertook extensive data modelling to identify those households in greatest need. Using this data, we were able to identify gaps in national government and local support to date. We continue to work closely in partnership with our VCS partners such as Citizens Advice and the food security organisations.

9. **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – List of the originally proposed projects and recommendations with next steps following Place and Resources Overview Committee 11 July

10. **Background Papers**

- [Cost of Living Challenge Cabinet paper 23rd February 2023](#)
- [Cost of Living Challenge People and Health Scrutiny paper 7th March 2024](#)
- [Cost of living Challenge Cabinet paper 11th June 2024](#)
- [Cost of Living Place and Resources Overview Committee 11th July 2024](#)

11. **Report Sign Off**

- 11.1 This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s)

Appendix 1 – List of the originally proposed projects and recommendations with next steps following Place and Resources Overview Committee 11th July

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No.	DC/ VCSO lead	Project recommendations by P&RO committee 11/07/24	Amount	Next Steps
1	Housing – Homelessness prevention	To continue the additional support provided in Q3&4 23-24 with 4 priority programmes of support: Support	£177,500	Delegated authority to support once monitoring has been agreed.
2	Place - Economic Regeneration	To continue to invest in the Healthy Homes Dorset scheme, focusing on geographical locations of disadvantage. Support	£200,000	Delegated authority to support once monitoring has been agreed. Ensure social worker teams can refer in and fund vulnerable residents
3	Citizens Advice	To extend the CoL caseworkers and adding a further 0.5FTE to assist with increased demand. Additional resource for volunteer training and supervision Support	£214,489	Delegated authority to support once monitoring has been agreed.
4	Corporate Services - Revenue and Benefits	To continue to support the Discretionary Housing Payment Allowance. Support	£100,000	Delegated authority to support once monitoring has been agreed.
5	Adults Services - Housing	To continue to support the Disabilities Facilities Grant Support	£150,000	LC – to confirm whether we put a charge on the houses? <i>(no due to tight regulations on reclaiming, most residents aren't eligible – very costly)</i> Delegated authority to support once monitoring has been agreed.

6	Adults Services - Housing	Investment in Lendology. Support	£50,000	Service Manager Housing Standards to give a briefing about Lendology at an overview / scrutiny meeting. Decision will be made following this.
7	Communities and Partnerships & VCSO	Continue to invest in emergency and affordable food security that has a referral system. Support	£100,000	Agreed but with flexibility for special cases who can prove worth outside of referral system. Delegated authority to support once monitoring has been agreed.
8	Communities and Partnerships & VCSO	Invest in more VCS led sustainable and affordable food security projects in areas of most need. Support	£100,000	Projects funded to be discussed at 1/4ly scrutiny committee, very important its grass roots up. Delegated authority to support once monitoring has been agreed.
9	Children's Services & VCSO	Boost the Household Support Fund (HSF) targeted means tested energy support referral scheme Support	£100,000	Consider other referrers such as Vale pantry (dependant on means testing criteria) LC speak to Sarah C. Delegated authority to support once monitoring has been agreed.
10	People First Dorset	Invest in a targeted programme for Cost of Living advice, support and anti-scams for vulnerable residents with learning disabilities. Support	£25,000	Delegated authority to support once monitoring has been agreed.
11	Age UK NSW Dorset	Invest in their information, advice and guidance service for vulnerable older	£50,000	Concept of funding to support older people access IAG services and get

		residents to ensure they are receiving all the income they are entitled to. Declined as is		support for benefit form completion, however not support directly specifically for just Age NSW as other agencies that support residents with this geographically. Develop a targeted support fund and invite bids. Need to consider support provision for East Dorset
12	Island Community Action	Invest in their Helping Hands programme that directly supports 1020+ vulnerable older/vulnerable people on Portland. Support	£50,000	Delegated authority to support once monitoring has been agreed.
13	Dorset Community Action	Support for village/community hall sustainability. Support	£30,000	Must include Church/Faith halls in this offer also as part of grant agreement Delegated authority to support once monitoring has been agreed.
14	Place – Community Transport & VCSO	Invest in the sustainability of Dorset's community transport network. Support	£100,000	Feed into Transport EAP Delegated authority to support once monitoring has been agreed.
15	Customer Services - Libraries	Invest in the extension of the digital inclusion device loan scheme. Support	£10,000	Delegated authority to support once monitoring has been agreed.
16	Children's Services & VCSO	To continue the additional 4 targeted priority programmes that support low-income families Support	£100,000	If HAF funding extended, consider increasing amounts on this project. Focus HAF projects for small rural areas. Delegated authority to support once monitoring has been agreed.

17	Economic Regeneration – Digital Place	Invest in the Digital Doorway device programme for vulnerable residents Decline	£150,000	Cllrs. Did not agree this was CoL but a fill in for BAU so declined to support this project. However should be part of a sustainability programme.
		Total:	£1,556,989	
18+		Yet to be allocated for quarters 3 and 4 according to emerging trends.	£443,011	
		Budget total:	£2,000,000	

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People and Health Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Meeting Date: 14 November 2024

Report Title	Aims and Objectives	Lead Officers / Members	Other Information
Performance Dashboard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review the most recent performance information and use this to agree items to add to the committee work programme for further analysis. 	<p>David Bonner – Service Manager for Business Intelligence & Performance</p> <p>Cllr Nick Ireland – Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate, Performance and Safeguarding</p>	
Cost of Living Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review and monitor the progress of cost of living support. 	<p>Laura Cornette – Business Partner for Communities and Partnerships</p> <p>Cllr Ryan Hope – Cabinet Member for Customer, Culture and Community Engagement</p>	Regular reports to scrutiny on Cost of Living Support requested by the Place and Resources Overview Committee
Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback from a working group which reviewed and scrutinised the annual report. 	<p>Sian Walker-McAllister – Independent Chair</p> <p>Cllr Steve Robinson – Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care</p>	

Prisoner Early Release Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefing note or verbal update on the early release of prisoners through September and October. 	<p>Andrew Billany – Corporate Director for Housing</p> <p>Cllr Gill Taylor – Cabinet Member for Health and Housing</p>	Request for an update from the People & Health Scrutiny Committee on 1 August
Corporate Complaints Team Annual Report 2023-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review and scrutinise the complaints data for the Year 2023-24. 	<p>Cllr Nick Ireland – Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate, Performance and Safeguarding</p> <p>Antony Bygrave – Senior Assurance Officer Complaints</p>	

Meeting Date: 16 January 2025

Report Title	Aims and Objectives	Lead Officers / Members	Other Information
Budget Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To scrutinise the council's budget and medium-term financial plan for the year 2025-26 To make any recommendations to Cabinet. 	<p>Aidan Dunn – Executive Director of Corporate Development / Section 151 Officer</p> <p>Cllr Simon Clifford – Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Strategy</p>	Consideration by Cabinet on 30 January 2024 and Full Council on 13 February 2024.

Report Title	Aims and Objectives	Lead Officers / Members	Other Information
Dorset Safeguarding Children's Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review the effectiveness of the new arrangements for the Dorset Safeguarding Children's Partnership 	<p>Sunita Khattra-Hall – Corporate Director for Quality Assurance and Safeguarding Families</p> <p>Cllr Clare Sutton – Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills</p>	Committee to receive an update in 6 and 12 months since the decision (i.e. February and August 2025)
Urgent and Emergency Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To receive an update on a system-wide transformation programme to transform and improve urgent and emergency care services in Dorset. 	<p>Louise Ford – Strategic Health and Adult Social Care Integration Lead</p> <p>Cllr Steve Robinson – Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care</p>	
Performance Dashboard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review the most recent performance information and use this to agree items to add to the committee work programme for further analysis. 	<p>Chris Heighway – Performance and Analytics Team Manager</p> <p>Cllr Nick Ireland – Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate, Performance and Safeguarding</p>	

Meeting Date: 8 April 2025

Report Title	Aims and Objectives	Lead Officers / Members	Other Information
Housing Strategy	To scrutinise and review the Housing Strategy.	Andrew Billany – Corporate Director for Housing Cllr Gill Taylor – Cabinet Member for Health and Housing	Item raised as a result of the committee’s work on registered providers.
Cost of Living Support	To review and monitor the progress of cost of living support.	Laura Cornette – Business Partner for Communities and Partnerships Cllr Ryan Hope – Cabinet Member for Customer, Culture and Community Engagement	Regular reports to scrutiny on Cost of Living Support requested by the Place and Resources Overview Committee

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Meeting Date: Unscheduled Committee Items

Report Title	Aims and Objectives	Lead Officers / Members	Other Information
Dorset Safeguarding Children’s Partnership	To review the effectiveness of the new arrangements for the Dorset Safeguarding Children’s Partnership	Cllr Clare Sutton – Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Education and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update in 6 and 12 months (i.e. February and August 2025)
Integrated Neighbourhood Teams			<ul style="list-style-type: none">

Better Care Fund		Cllr Steve Robinson – Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care	•
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Informal Work of the Committee:

Date	Topic	Format	Members	Lead Officers / Members	Other Information
Early 2025	Update session from Dorset County Hospital / Dorset HealthCare	Online meeting / Potential site visit	People & Health Scrutiny Committee		
Early 2025	Visit to University Hospitals Dorset	Site Visit	People & Health Scrutiny Committee		Invitation received following a meeting with UHD.
May/June 2025	Annual NHS Quality Accounts		People & Health Scrutiny Committee	George Dare – Senior Democratic Services Officer	To provide a response to local NHS Trust Quality Accounts.
Quarterly	Review of the committee's performance and risk dashboards.	Informal Meeting	People & Health Scrutiny Committee	Chris Heighway – Performance and Analytics Team Manager	Review of the dashboards to identify potential future areas for review by the committee.
31 October 2024	Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report	Working Group	Cllrs Beddow, Holland, Somper, and Woode	George Dare – Senior Democratic Services Officer	Review of the Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report, to report back to the meeting on 14 November.

TBC	Educational Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)	Enquiry Day	Cllrs Coombs, Somper, and Bolwell	TBC	Decision to establish an enquiry day was made at the People & Health Scrutiny Committee on 24 October 2024.
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**The Cabinet Forward Plan - November 2024 to February 2025
For the period 1 OCTOBER 2024 to 31 JANUARY 2025
(Publication date – 21 OCTOBER 2024)**

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 Members and Portfolios 2024/25

Nick Ireland	Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate, Performance and Safeguarding
Richard Biggs	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Property & Assets and Economic Growth
Jon Andrews	Place Services
Shane Bartlett	Planning and Emergency Planning
Simon Clifford	Finance & Capital Strategy
Ryan Holloway	Corporate Development and Transformation
Ryan Hope	Customer, Culture and Community Engagement
Steve Robinson	Adult Social Care
Clare Sutton	Children's Services, Education & Skills
Gill Taylor	Health and Housing.

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
November					
<p>Quarter 2 Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>To consider the Quarter 2 Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 19 Nov 2024</p>		<p>Cabinet Member for Finance & 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>Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and budget strategy - update</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>To receive a budget update for 2025/26.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 19 Nov 2024</p>		<p>Cabinet Member for Finance & 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>Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>This policy set out the discretionary and mandatory financial assistance Dorset Council offer to eligible residents to improv or adapt their property in</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 19 Nov 2024</p>	<p>People and Health Overview Committee 29 Oct 2024</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Health and Housing</p>	<p><i>Richard Conway, Service Manager for Housing Standards</i> <i>richard.conway@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, People - Adults (Jonathan Price)</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 DORSET Council area. The Council are required by the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 to agree and publish a policy for any housing assistance it wishes to offer.</p>					
<p>Designing out severe hardship and improving social mobility in Dorset</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>To establish a cross-directorate and multi-agency taskforce with the purpose of improving social mobility, reducing poverty, and ensuring cohesive responses across the Council and with wider partners.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 19 Nov 2024</p>	<p>Health and Wellbeing Board 26 Jun 2024</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills</p>	<p><i>Alice Deacon, Corporate Director for Commissioning and Partnerships alice.deacon@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, People - Children</i></p>
<p>Draft Contaminated Land Strategy</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>Draft Contaminated Land Strategy and report of consultation findings on the draft strategy.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 19 Nov 2024</p>	<p>Place and Resources Overview Committee 12 Sep 2024</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Health and Housing</p>	<p><i>Steven Horsler, Environmental Health Officer steven.horsler@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Janet Moore, Service Manager for Environmental Protection Janet.Moore@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Lead for Place Directorate (Jan Britton)</i></p>
<p>Enterprise Resource Performance System (Outline Business Case)</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 19 Nov 2024</p>		<p>Cabinet Member for Corporate Development and</p>	<p><i>James Ailward, Head of ICT Operations james.ailward@dorsetcoun</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>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>The current DES system which is supported by SAP will be end of life in 2027 and therefore will need to be replaced. We have been working with Socitm Advisory (external consultancy) to investigate the options available. The outline business case is to be presented to Cabinet for their approval.</p>				Transformation	<p><i>cil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, Place</i></p>
<p>Dorset SACRE Common Agreed Syllabus</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>To consider a report on the Dorset SACRE agreed syllabus.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 19 Nov 2024</p>	<p>People and Health Overview Committee 29 Oct 2024</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills</p>	<p><i>Amanda Davis, Corporate Director for Education and Learning</i> <i>amanda.davis@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, People - Children</i></p>
<p>Future of Wareham Pedestrian Level Crossing</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>The report considered a letter and report issued by Network Rail and will present to Cabinet recommendations on a long-term solution to provide a safe, permanent, sustainable form of step free pedestrian access</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 19 Nov 2024</p>		<p>Cabinet Member for Place Services</p>	<p><i>Jack Wiltshire, Head of Highways</i> <i>jack.wiltshire@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Lead for Place Directorate (Jan Britton)</i></p>

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
connecting Northport to Wareham Town Centre.					
<p>Weymouth Harbour - Future Development and Open Port Duty Report</p> <p>Key Decision - No Public Access - Open</p> <p>This report provides an update on the progress of Weymouth Harbour's future development, focusing on the modification of the harbour's Open Port Duty to allow for commercial development opportunities in line with the Council's Government funding commitments. The proposal allows for a Harbour Revision Order (HRO) to restrict the current Open Port Duty, allowing the harbour to accommodate vessels of a specified size while ensuring compliance with Statutory Harbour Authority obligations.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 19 Nov 2024</p>		<p>Cabinet Member for Place Services</p>	<p><i>Ken Buchan, Head of Environment and Wellbeing ken.buchan@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Ed Carter, Weymouth Harbour Master ed.carter@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Lead for Place Directorate (Jan Britton)</i></p>
<p>Dorset Council draft Transformation Plan</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>This will provide the strategic framework for whole council transformation including target</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 19 Nov 2024</p>		<p>Cabinet Member for Corporate Development and Transformation</p>	<p><i>Nina Coakley, Head of Change n.coakley@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Lisa Cotton, Corporate Director for Customer and Cultural Services lisa.cotton@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director,</i></p>

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
operating model, governance farmwork, high-level transformation roadmap and success measures for 2025-29.					<i>Corporate Development - Section 151 Officer (Aidan Dunn)</i>
<p>Our Future Council draft business case</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>This paper will provide the case for change and the baseline along with the high-level opportunities from OFC and will determine potential value for money. It will set out the approximate investment required and benefits appraisal with decision to proceed to full business case and to mobilise transformation programmes to identify and implement the deliverables.</p>	Decision Maker Cabinet	Decision Date 19 Nov 2024		Cabinet Member for Corporate Development and Transformation	<p><i>Steven Ford, Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Sustainability</i> <i>steven.ford@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, Corporate Development - Section 151 Officer (Aidan Dunn)</i></p>
<p>Operation of Fairfield Market, Dorchester</p> <p>Key Decision - No Public Access - Open</p> <p>This report seeks authority for officers to negotiate and enter into a suitable operating agreement with the Town Council and refresh the Dorchester Markets Joint Informal Panel terms of reference.</p>	Decision Maker Cabinet	Decision Date 19 Nov 2024		Cabinet Member for Health and Housing	<p><i>Graham Duggan, Head of Community & Public Protection</i> <i>graham.duggan@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Lead for Place Directorate (Jan Britton)</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>Nitrogen Reduction in Poole Harbour SPD - Outstanding mitigation liability</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>Proposal for securing mitigation to address the liability associated with the withdrawal Nitrogen Reduction in Poole Harbour SPD.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 19 Nov 2024</p>		<p>Cabinet Member for Planning and Emergency Planning</p>	<p><i>Mike Garrity, Head of Planning mike.garrity@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Terry Sneller, Strategic Planning Manager terry.sneller@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Lead for Place Directorate (Jan Britton)</i></p>
<p>Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme Project Outline Business Case</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>The Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme is a £3m DEFRA fully funded project. It intends to help the communities of North Swanage and Charmouth to better adapt to a changing, eroding coastline. The Environment Agency is supportive of the project and business.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 19 Nov 2024</p>		<p>Cabinet Member for Place Services</p>	<p><i>Matthew Penny, Service Manager - Flood & Coastal Erosion matthew.penny@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Lead for Place Directorate (Jan Britton)</i></p>
<p>Dorset Innovation Park Management Options</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Fully exempt</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 19 Nov 2024</p>		<p>Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Property & Assets and Economic Growth</p>	<p><i>Nick Webster, Head of Growth and Economic Regeneration nicholas.webster@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Lead for Place</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 council defines a key decision, in terms of procurement activity, as those with a financial consequence of £500k or more. This report will provide notice of the planned / known procurement activities that Cabinet will need to make a key decision on.</p>					<p><i>Directorate (Jan Britton)</i></p>
<p>Draft Council Plan 2024-2029</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>draft of the new Council Plan for discussion and approval, setting out the council's strategic priorities for the next 5 years.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Dorset Council</p>	<p>Decision Date 5 Dec 2024</p>	<p>Joint Overview Committee Cabinet 29 Oct 2024 19 Nov 2024</p>	<p>Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate, Performance and Safeguarding</p>	<p><i>Jennifer Lewis, Head of Strategic Communications and Engagement</i> <i>jennifer.lewis@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Chief Executive (Matt Prosser)</i></p>
<p>December</p>					

<p>Independent Reviewing Officer's Annual Report</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>To consider the Independent Reviewing Officer's Annual Report.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 17 Dec 2024</p>		<p>Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills</p>	<p><i>Sanita Khattra-Hall, Corporate Director of Quality Assurance and Safeguarding Partnership</i> <i>sanita.khattra-hall@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, People - Children</i></p>
<p>Annual Local Authority Designated Officer Report</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 17 Dec 2024</p>		<p>Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills</p>	<p><i>Sanita Khattra-Hall, Corporate Director of Quality Assurance and</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>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>To consider the Annual LADO Report.</p>					<p><i>Safeguarding Partnership</i> <i>sanita.khattra-hall@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, People - Children</i></p>
<p>Alderholt Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2023</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>Report relating to the 'making' (adoption) of the Alderholt Neighbourhood Plan following examination and pending a successful outcome in the referendum.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 17 Dec 2024</p>		<p>Cabinet Member for Planning and Emergency Planning</p>	<p><i>Ed Gerry, Community Planning Manager</i> <i>ed.gerry@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Lead for Place Directorate (Jan Britton)</i></p>
<p>January 2025</p>					
<p>Quarter 3 Financial Monitoring 2024/25</p> <p>Key Decision - No Public Access - Open</p> <p>To consider the Quarter 3 financial Monitoring Report 2024/25</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 28 Jan 2025</p>		<p>Cabinet Member for Finance & 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>Our Future Council Business Case</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 28 Jan 2025</p>		<p>Cabinet Member for Corporate Development and</p>	<p><i>Steven Ford, Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and</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>Public Access - Open</p> <p>Full business case setting out case for change and vision for the future with options to deliver whole council transformation. Will set out the costs and the investment requirements in conjunction with a detailed benefits appraisal setting out the savings to be achieved.</p>				Transformation	<p><i>Sustainability</i> <i>steven.ford@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Lisa Cotton, Corporate Director for Customer and Cultural Services</i> <i>lisa.cotton@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, Corporate Development - Section 151 Officer (Aidan Dunn)</i></p>
<p>Dorset Council Transformation Plan</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes</p> <p>Public Access - Open</p> <p>Final transformation plan more fully formed to support the delivery programme for OFC and provide detail on wider service transformation plans. It will set out the strategic framework for transformation for 2025-29 including the target operating model, governance framework including benefit management approach, transformation priorities and roadmap, baseline success measures, alignment to council plan and MTFP/financial strategy, and alignment cross council with partner transformation e.g. integrated care board.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 28 Jan 2025</p>		Cabinet Member for Corporate Development and Transformation	<p><i>Nina Coakley, Head of Change</i> <i>n.coakley@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Lisa Cotton, Corporate Director for Customer and Cultural Services</i> <i>lisa.cotton@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
<p>Budget strategy and medium-term financial plan (MTFP)</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>To consider a report and recommendation of the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Assets.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Dorset Council</p>	<p>Decision Date 11 Feb 2025</p>	<p>People and Health Scrutiny Committee Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee Cabinet 16 Jan 2025 17 Jan 2025 28 Jan 2025</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Finance & 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>February</p>					
<p>Growth & Economic Regeneration Strategy</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>To consider and agree a refresh of the Council's strategy for economic growth. This will encompass the functions to be taken over by the Council from Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership in accordance with devolution and promote the needs and actions required to drive forward the economy in the Dorset Council area.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 25 Feb 2025</p>	<p>Place and Resources Overview Committee Place and Resources Overview Committee 21 Nov 2024 30 Jan 2025</p>	<p>Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Property & Assets and Economic Growth</p>	<p><i>Jon Bird, Service Manager for Growth and Economic Regeneration</i> <i>jon.bird@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Nick Webster, Head of Growth and Economic Regeneration</i> <i>nicholas.webster@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Lead for Place Directorate (Jan Britton)</i></p>
<p>March</p>					

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
<p>Update of Carbon Reduction Targets</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>Paper to revise and bring forward the carbon reduction targets set out in the Council's Natural Environment, Climate and Ecology Strategy.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Cabinet</p>	<p>Decision Date 25 Mar 2025</p>	<p>Place and Resources Overview Committee 30 Jan 2025</p>	<p>Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate, Performance and Safeguarding</p>	<p><i>Antony Littlechild, Sustainability Team Manager antony.littlechild@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk 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.

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**Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd
Forward Plan - December 2024 to March 2025
For the period 1 DECEMBER 2024 to 31 MARCH 2025
(Publication date – 4 NOVEMBER 2024)**

Explanatory Note:

This Forward Plan contains future items to be considered by the Shareholder Committee for the Care Dorset Holdings Ltd. 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 2024/25

Cllr Nick Ireland – Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate, Performance and Safeguarding

Cllr Richard Biggs – Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Property & Assets, and Economic Growth

Cllr Ryan Holloway – Cabinet Member for Corporate Development and Transformation

Cllr Steve Robinson – Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

Cllr Gill Taylor – Cabinet Member for Health and Housing

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Cabinet Member	Officer Contact
December				
Dorset Council Delegated Decisions (as required) Key Decision - No Public Access - Open	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd	Decision Date 2 Dec 2024	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care	<i>Mark Tyson, Corporate Director for Adult Commissioning & Improvement mark.tyson@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, People - Adults (Jonathan Price)</i>
Dorset Council Organisational Update Key Decision - No Public Access - Part exempt	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd	Decision Date 2 Dec 2024	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care	<i>Mark Tyson, Corporate Director for Adult Commissioning & Improvement mark.tyson@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, People - Adults (Jonathan Price)</i>
Care Dorset Update Key Decision - No Public Access - Part exempt	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd	Decision Date 2 Dec 2024	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care	<i>Executive Director, People - Adults (Jonathan Price)</i>
Annual Performance Update Key Decision - No Public Access - Open	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd	Decision Date 2 Dec 2024	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care	<i>Executive Director, People - Adults (Jonathan Price)</i>

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
Alignment of End of Year Reporting Periods Key Decision - No Public Access - Open	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd	Decision Date 2 Dec 2024	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care	<i>Executive Director, People - Adults (Jonathan Price)</i>
Care Dorset 5 Year Strategy/Business Plan Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Fully exempt	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd	Decision Date 2 Dec 2024	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care	<i>Executive Director, People - Adults (Jonathan Price)</i>
<p>March</p> <p>Page 12</p>				
Dorset Council Delegated Decisions (as required) Key Decision - No Public Access - Open	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd	Decision Date 24 Mar 2025	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care	<i>Executive Director, People - Adults (Jonathan Price)</i>
Dorset Council Organisational Update Key Decision - No Public Access - Part exempt	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd	Decision Date 24 Mar 2025	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care	<i>Executive Director, People - Adults (Jonathan Price)</i>

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
<p>Care Dorset Update</p> <p>Key Decision - No Public Access - Part exempt</p>	<p>Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd</p>	<p>Decision Date 24 Mar 2025</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care</p>	<p><i>Executive Director, People - Adults (Jonathan Price)</i></p>
<p>Annual Reports</p>				
<p>Care Dorset Business Plan - 6 month review and update</p> <p>Key Decision - No Public Access - Open</p> <p>For the Shareholder Committee to consider progress in delivering the 5 year business plan, and any review of the plan as necessary.</p>	<p>Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd</p>	<p>Decision Date</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care</p>	<p><i>Jonathan Price, Executive Director of People - Adults and Housing jonathan.price@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Mark Tyson, Corporate Director for Adult Commissioning & Improvement mark.tyson@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, People - Adults (Jonathan Price)</i></p>

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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.

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The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE) Forward Plan For the period 1 SEPTEMBER 2024 to 31 DECEMBER 2024 (Publication date – 19 JULY 2024)

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 2024/25

Cllr Nick Ireland – Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Governance, Performance, Communications, Environment, Climate Change and Safeguarding

Cllr Richard Biggs – Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Property & Assets, Economic Growth & Levelling Up

Cllr Ryan Hope - Portfolio Holder for Customer, Culture and Community Engagement

Cllr Clare Sutton - Children's Services, Education & Skills

Cllr Gill Taylor - Portfolio Holder for Public Health, Environmental Health, Housing, Community Safety and Regulatory Service

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 16 Sep 2024	Councillor Clare Sutton	<i>Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)</i>
Dorset Council Commissioning Report Key Decision - No Public Access - Part exempt	Decision Maker The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE)	Decision Date 16 Sep 2024	Councillor Clare Sutton	<i>Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)</i>
DCoE - Report of the Chair of the Board Key Decision - No Public Access - Part exempt	Decision Maker The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE)	Decision Date 16 Sep 2024	Councillor Clare Sutton	<i>Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)</i>
December				

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 9 Dec 2024	Councillor Clare Sutton	<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 9 Dec 2024	Councillor Clare Sutton	<i>Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)</i>
DCoE - Report of the Chair of the Board Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Part exempt	Decision Maker The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE)	Decision Date 9 Dec 2024	Councillor Clare Sutton	<i>Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)</i>
Performance of the Traded Activities of the Company Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open	Decision Maker The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE)	Decision Date 9 Dec 2024	Councillor Clare Sutton	<i>Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)</i>
Annual Reports				

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