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CABINET

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 29 JULY 2025

Present: Cllrs Nick Ireland (Chair), Richard Biggs (Vice-Chair), Shane Bartlett, Simon Clifford, Ryan Hope, Steve Robinson, Clare Sutton, Gill Taylor and Ben Wilson

Apologies: Cllrs Jon Andrews

Also present: Cllr Peter Dickenson, Cllr Les Fry, Cllr Hannah Hobbs-Chell, Cllr Rob Hughes, Cllr Sherry Jespersen, Cllr Steve Murcer, Cllr Louie O'Leary, Cllr Mike Parkes, Cllr Andrew Parry, Cllr Jane Somper and Cllr Duncan Sowry-House

Also present remotely: Cllr Laura Beddow, Cllr Bridget Bolwell, Cllr Ray Bryan, Cllr Beryl Ezzard, Cllr Barry Goringe, Cllr Sally Holland, Cllr Stella Jones, Cllr Paul Kimber, Cllr Cathy Lugg, Cllr David Morgan, Cllr David Northam, Cllr Emma Parker, Cllr Byron Quayle and Cllr David Taylor

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

Jan Britton (Executive Director - Place), Sean Cremer (Corporate Director for Finance and Commercial), George Dare (Senior Democratic and Governance Officer), Megan Rochester (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Mark Tyson (Corporate Director for Adult Commissioning & Improvement), Paul Dempsey (Executive Director of People - Children), Julia Ingram (Corporate Director for Adult Social Care Operations), Beth Whittaker (Interim Corporate Director for Education and Learning), Jonathan Mair (Director of Legal and Democratic and Monitoring Officer), Rachel Partridge (Deputy Director of Public Health), James Ailward (Head of ICT Operations), Jessica Maskrey (Head of Service – Assets & Property), Louis Wicks (Democratic Services Officer Apprentice) and Paul Scothern (Service Manager Capital Commissioning)

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

Steven Ford (Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Sustainability)

24. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

25. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Ireland declared an interest in Item 11 - Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system replacement programme. He would leave the meeting for the consideration of the item.

Cllrs Clifford, Bartlett, and Sutton declared they had an interest in the Dorset Innovation Park as they had been appointed to the Shareholder Committee and had not yet updated their register of interests.

26. **Public Participation**

There was one question from a member of the public. A copy of the full question and the response is set out in Appendix 1 of these minutes.

27. **Questions from Councillors**

There were no questions submitted by councillors.

28. **Forward Plan**

The draft Cabinet Forward Plan for September to December 2025 was received and noted.

29. **Procurement of Recovery and Community Resilience Contracts**

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care introduced the report. The FutureCare Programme was being used to reduce the length of stay in hospitals and to review how these services operate. However, the contracts were due to expire with no further options for extension. It was critical, that the services are maintained whilst the longer-term plans are finalised. This paper requested permission for a direct award of a further contract to existing providers, pending the outcome of longer-term transformation planning.

The Cabinet Member apologised for the item being added late to the Forward Plan and thanked the Chair and Vice-Chair of the People and Health Scrutiny Committee.

A member questioned why there was no other option than to award a direct contract. The Cabinet Member explained that changes through the FutureCare programme were still being finalised and at the current time it was the best option financially and operationally. There would be a full tender for the contract when the outcomes of the FutureCare programme were known.

It was proposed by Cllr S Robinson and seconded by Cllr N Ireland.

Decision:

- (a) That, the current performance and the importance of the Recovery & Community Resilience contracts in the operation of the local urgent and emergency care system, be noted
- (b) That the use of the direct award process C under The Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023 (PSR23), be approved, to award five contracts to the existing providers in order to continue the existing Recovery and Community Resilience (RCR) service; and
- (a) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Adults & Housing, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, to make all necessary arrangements to give effect to the direct award to the existing providers.

Reason for the decision:

Dorset Council was the Lead Commissioner, on behalf of the Dorset Integrated Care System, for the Recovery and Community Resilience (RCR) contracts, which were funded in the main from NHS Contributions via the Better Care Fund. This was a critical service to avoid bed blocking with knock-on effects for the Integrated Care Board and the Council. There was an essential requirement to have established contract provision in place.

30. Urgent items - SEND Capital Programme

The following items of business were considered by the Chairman as urgent pursuant to section 100B (4) b) of the Local Government Act 1972. The item was considered to be urgent to enable the works to take place over the summer.

SEND Capital Programme

The report was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills. The item enabled work to take place over the summer holidays at the Dorchester Learning Centre. The numbers of places the work would support was outlined. The Cabinet Member explained the reason why the item had not been added to the Forward Plan and thanked the Chairman of the People and Health Scrutiny Committee for allowing the urgent item.

In response to how the Cabinet Member would ensure transparency and accountability with the decision, the Cabinet Member explained this decision was about giving delegated authority for the project and that the decision and project was in the open domain.

In response to a member's question about the item being urgent, the Corporate Director for Education and Learning took full responsibility for the item being urgent, explaining that officers thought the project was covered by a previous delegation given to them by Cabinet in 2022, and it was realised too late to add the item to the Forward Plan or as a regular item on the agenda.

In response to a question about what would happen if the project was delayed, the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills advised that the work would need to wait until the next summer holiday period and there would be inflationary costs.

There was general support from members for the project to take place and to address capacity issues with placements. Members thanked the Corporate Director for Education and Learning for taking responsibility for the late report.

It was proposed by Cllr C Sutton and seconded by Cllr S Clifford.

Decision:

- (a) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance & Capital Strategy and the S151 Officer to enter into a contract for the project set out in the exempt Appendix B of the report to Cabinet 29 July 2025.
- (b) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with the Executive Director People – Children’s to enter construction contracts at the appropriate time provided the project forms part of the SEND Capital Programme and the project cost is contained within the overall programme budget.

Reason for the decision:

To ensure no further delays were incurred for the project set out in exempt Appendix B and to ensure the appropriate delegation was in place for future projects which form part of the SEND Capital programme.

31. **Exempt Business**

It was proposed by Cllr S Clifford and seconded by Cllr B Wilson.

Decision:

That the press and the public be excluded for the following items in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

Reason for taking the item in private:

Paragraph 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The live streaming was concluded at this juncture.

32. **Disposals Update**

The Cabinet Member for Property & Assets and Economic Growth introduced the report and outlined the proposals.

Non-Cabinet and Cabinet members discussed the report and asked questions of the Cabinet Member and officers.

Proposed by Cllr R Biggs and seconded by Cllr S Robinson.

Decision:

That the recommendations as set out in the exempt report of 29 July 2025, be approved.

Reason for the decision:

- (a) To manage the disposal of sites surplus to requirements as identified as priority disposals by the Council.
- (b) To generate capital receipts and save holding costs.

33. Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system replacement programme

Cllr N Ireland left the meeting for the consideration of this item. The Vice-Chair, Cllr R Biggs, chaired the remainder of the meeting.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Development introduced the exempt report, highlighted the key areas and outlined the recommendations.

Non-Cabinet and Cabinet members asked questions of the Cabinet Member and officers.

It was proposed by Cllr B Wilson and seconded by Cllr S Clifford.

Decision:

That the recommendations, as set out in the report of 29 July 2025, be approved.

Reason for the decision:

To support to provision of a new ERP solution to transform our ways of working, as an integral part of the “Our Future Council” transformation programme.

Duration of meeting: 6.30 - 7.25 pm

Chair

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Public Questions – Cabinet 29 July 2025

Question from Karen Tippins, resident of Shaftesbury

On 15 October 2024, Cabinet awarded £876,278 in s106 funding to Shaftesbury Town Council, based on an August 2024 application that included plans later found to be non-compliant with Building Regulations and cost estimates underestimated by hundreds of thousands of pounds.

Since that decision, the project has been redesigned by a new architect, will require a fresh planning application, and is now over £500,000 above the original budget.

The Section 106 agreement was for community use, yet the first floor is now proposed to be rented to Dorset Council for a Family Hub and to the NHS - both statutory, employment based uses. This change was never consulted on with residents, and the land at Mampitts Green, East of Shaftesbury is designated for recreational, not employment use.

Will the Cabinet and/or Scrutiny Committee initiate a review into the October 2024 Cabinet decision, in light of these material changes and concerns over planning compliance, cost, and use of public funds?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Planning and Emergency Planning

The S106 award approved by Cabinet on 15 October 2024 included eight conditions that Shaftesbury Town Council have to comply with before any funding or land will be released by Dorset Council.

Five of these conditions require Shaftesbury Town Council to provide various pieces of documentary evidence. These include a detailed operating plan, project costing & delivery plan, ringfenced bank account, external funding grant applications and engagement with community groups.

Shaftesbury Town Council submitted these evidence documents on 18 July 2025, and they are currently being reviewed for their compliance with the conditions.

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