

Date of committee: 9 December 2025

Date published: 10 December 2025

Date of implementation: 18 December 2025

DECISIONS OF THE CABINET 9 DECEMBER 2025

The following decisions were made by the Cabinet on 9 December 2025 and will come into force and may be implemented on 18 December 2025 unless the decision is called in for scrutiny.

In accordance with the council's constitution, any six members of the same relevant Scrutiny Committee may request the Monitoring Officer to 'call-in' a decision for scrutiny. The Monitoring Officer will be provided with written notice that will identify the decision to be called-in and the ground for the call-in when the request is made. If satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for the proposed call-in, the Monitoring Officer will notify the decision-maker of the call-in within 5 clear working days. The deadline for this request is **17 December 2025**.

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

6 COUNCIL PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

- (i) That the establishment of the council plan monitoring framework as a key component of the Strategic Performance and Risk Monitoring Framework, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be noted.
- (ii) That the publication of the council plan reporting dashboard, providing transparent access to performance data, be noted.
- (iii) That progress to date and the development of foundational programmes that support delivery of each council plan priority, be noted.
- (iv) That early delivery highlights and case studies demonstrating impact of our work, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, be noted
- (v) That the updated enabling strategy and policy framework that underpins council plan delivery, as set out in Appendix 3 be approved.
- (vi) That the refined performance framework for the Communities for All priority, for ongoing monitoring following co-design work and as set out in Appendix 4, be approved.

Reason for the decision

The decision supported the council's commitment to robust governance, transparency, and continuous improvement by aligning with the reporting mechanisms set out in Dorset Council's Strategic Performance and Risk Monitoring Framework. Specifically, this approach established a twice-yearly reporting cycle to Cabinet on progress against the Council Plan, comprising of a mid-year update and an annual end-of-year performance report in summer.

The production of an annual report aligns with Local Government Association (LGA) guidance on performance management for local authorities to ensure consistency with sector best practice.

7 DORSET LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY

- (i) That the final Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) be approved for publication, recognising its role as a statutory framework for nature recovery across the county.
- (ii) Cabinet agreed to integrate the LNRS into relevant council policies and decision-making, including planning, land management, climate adaptation, and public health and support the ongoing delivery of the LNRS.
- (iii) Cabinet acknowledged and thanked the contributions from stakeholders, including BCP Council, Natural England, community groups, farmers, landowners and residents, in shaping the strategy through the development and consultation phase.

Reason for the decision

To ensure Dorset Council complies with DEFRA requirements under the Environment Act 2021 by adopting and integrating the Local Nature Recovery Strategy as a statutory framework. This approach supported the reversal of biodiversity decline, strengthen climate resilience, and guide sustainable land use across the county.

8 DORSET NATIONAL LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

That the Dorset National Landscape Management Plan 2026 – 31 be adopted.

Reason of the decision

To ensure that the statutory responsibilities in relation to the National Landscapes were met.

9 ADOPTION OF THE CRANBORNE CHASE NATIONAL LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN

That the Cranborne Chase Partnership Plan (Management Plan) as set out at Appendix 2 of the report, be adopted.

Reason for the decision

Section 89 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 required the council to, 'prepare and publish a Management Plan which formulates [their] policy for the management of the AONB and for carrying out of their functions in relation to it.' Adoption of the management plans prepared by each National Landscape, for and on behalf of the local authorities that fall within the protected areas, helped to fulfil this part of the requirement.

10 NEW FOREST RECREATION MITIGATION STRATEGY

- (i) That the New Forest Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy 2025, be agreed in principle. Any minor changes to the final version of the Strategy, be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Planning and Emergency Planning in consultation with the Corporate Director for Planning.
- (ii) That the Strategy be applied within the 13.8km buffer and 15km buffer for larger sites to allow planning permissions to be granted
- (iii) That as an interim arrangement, secured funding be transferred to the New Forest National Park Authority (NFNPA) to extend their existing mitigation scheme whilst the new partnership scheme was established
- (iv) That, authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Planning and Emergency Planning in consultation with the Corporate Director for Planning for the agreement of guidance on proportional contributions for other over-night accommodation.

Reason for the decision

The New Forest Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy provided a long-term solution, and temporary arrangement, expanding the existing mitigation scheme to cover affected parts of Dorset. This would enable permissions to be granted in the interim. Joining the partnership scheme avoided the need for Dorset Council to develop its own complex alternative, which would delay planning consents.

11 REPORT TO CHANGE CABINET DECISION OF DELEGATIONS FOR HIGHWAY SERVICE CONTRACT (HTSC)

That the decision in minute 7 (c) of Cabinet of 20 May 2025 be replaced by the following decision:

That:

“Decisions to award contracts and works orders made under the Highways Term Service Contract (HTSC) up to the value of £500k, and the approval of associated term and conditions be made by officers in accordance with the Officer Scheme of Delegation.”

Reason for the decision

To not disapply the Officer Scheme of Delegation for Dorset Council.

12 AVERAGE SPEED CAMERAS - A30 SHERBORNE DUAL CARRIAGEWAY

That the allocation of Department for Transport funding for the installation of an Average Speed Camera system on the A30 Sherborne dual carriageway, supporting our commitment to creating safer and stronger communities.

Reason for the decision

Road Safety was a statutory duty under section 39 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and a strategic priority for Dorset Council. Collision data indicates a high number of serious incidents along this stretch with many vehicles recorded significantly exceeding the posted speed limit.

Evidence from multiple studies demonstrated that average speed camera systems were highly effective in reducing speeds and consequently collisions and casualties. investment in such a system on the A30 was considered a proportionate and evidenced-led intervention.

13 DORSET LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP CLOSURE

(i) That in its capacity as a Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership (DLEP) (CIC) company member, Cabinet resolved to ratify the decision to transfer and accept the following residual DLEP funds to Dorset Council.

(a) £866,951.67 revenue

(b) £2,498,208.50 capital

- (c) £1,275,000 capital loan repayments due
- (ii) That Cabinet agrees that the Council, in its capacity as a DLEP (CIC) company member, and as Accountable Body for the DLEP, to transfer a sum of £4,640,160.18 to BCP Council as their share of the residual DLEP funds.
 - (iii) That any further accrued interest on the DLEP funds, prior to their transfer, be split equally between Dorset Council and BCP Council.
 - (iv) That funds for the benefit of the community, be ringfenced and in accordance with the Objects of the DLEP.
 - (v) That received funds be maintained in an appropriate reserve budget to be allocated subject to the council's financial regulations and in accordance with the received legal advice on compliance with the Community Interest Company Regulations 2025.
 - (vi) That the resignation of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Strategy from the DLEP Board, be noted and that officers formally close the DLEP following successful transfer of the above funds and resignation of Board Members.
 - (vii) That authority be delegated to the Head of Legal Services to finalise any legal documentation required.

Reason for the decision

The acceptance of the revenue and capital funding for community benefits in the Dorset Council area would help deliver the Council Plan and Economic Growth Strategy and wider economic and social objectives.

14 FUTURE LEISURE MANAGEMENT

- (i) That the procurement of a single leisure contract operator, be agreed and Max Associates be recommissioned to develop the Dorset Leisure Centres Procurement Strategy required to achieve this.
- (ii) That the Dorset Leisure Centres Procurement Strategy be brought back to Cabinet for consideration and final approval of the strategy's recommendations in September 2026.
- (iii) That the Service Manager for Leisure, Arts and Cultural Services be authorised to agree contract extensions for Ferndown Leisure Centre, Blandford Leisure Centre and Dorchester Sports Centre for a further 2 years from the 1 April 2026 with an option for a further 1 year.

Reason for the decision

Procuring a single leisure contractor was best able to meet Council priorities and financial goals. A procurement strategy would set the timetable, tendering approach, service specifications, and risk management. Extending current contracts ensured centres stayed open during this process and transition.

18 ACQUISITION OF LAND NEIGHBOURING DORSET INNOVATION PARK

That the recommendations set out in the exempt report of 9 December 2025 be approved.

Reason for the decision

Acquiring land that neighbours the Dorset Innovation Park would help develop the long-term strategic role of Dorset Innovation Park (DIP) as the centre of the defence industry in Dorset facilitating defence company growth.