

Date of committee: 29 January 2026

Date published: 30 January 2026

Date of implementation: 9 February 2026

DECISIONS OF THE CABINET 29 JANUARY 2026

The following decisions were made by the Cabinet on 29 January 2026 and will come into force and may be implemented on 9 February 2026 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 **6 February 2026**.

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 CLIMATE PROGRAMME CAPITAL WORKSTREAMS OVER £500K

- (a) That the spend from the corporate climate capital programme for those elements identified as over £500k, as set out in the report to Cabinet or 29 January 2026, be approved.

Specifically:

- (i) £700k for the installation of the next phase of solar PV across the council's estate, and
 - (ii) £1.3m for replacement of more old, obsolete street lighting with LED street lighting using the PFI contract and in line with the Council's street lighting policy adopted September 2025.
- (b) That authority be delegated to the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Sustainability in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate, Performance and Safeguarding, to approve further individual item spend within the remaining climate capital allocation, for the identified projects.

Reason for the Decision

There is £4m remaining in the climate capital programme. Two workstreams allocated within the current climate capital programme had identified the requirement for spend above the £500k cabinet approval threshold, with the total of these amounting to £2m. Delegating approval for the further spend within the remaining allocation would allow the projects outlined in the report to proceed.

7 ACTIVE TRAVEL INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

That the Active Travel Infrastructure Plan be approved.

Reason for the decision

To enable the Active Travel Infrastructure Plan to be implemented.

8 TRANSFORMING PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

- (a) That the strategic direction for transforming public and community transport, as set out in the report of 29 January 2026, be endorsed
- (b) That the development of a Full Business Case exploring the range of options for delivering a modern, integrated and community-focused transport system, including financial, procurement, and consultation plans to enable implementation from April 2027, be approved.

Reason for the decision

To secure Cabinet endorsement for the strategic direction and authorise preparation of a Full Business Case for improving public and community transport, ensuring alignment with

the council's community-focused agenda, and enabling timely planning for investment, procurement, and consultation ahead of implementation in 2027.

10 DECEMBER 2025 QUARTER 3 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT 2025/26

- (a) That the Senior Leadership Team's forecast as of December 2025 including progress on the transformational and efficiency savings incorporated into the budget, be noted.
- (b) That the capital programme for 2025/26, be noted.
- (c) That the number and extent of contract exemptions, be noted.

Reason for the decision

To ensure the Council could set and deliver a balanced budget, this report provided an update on the forecast financial position for 2025/26 and the significant operational and financial pressures facing the organisation. In a challenging national context for local authorities, effective oversight of activities and budgets was essential to maintain financial sustainability, support delivery of Council Plan priorities, and ensure the Council continued to provide vital services and wider economic benefits.

11 SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2027-2028

- (a) That the following policies that make up Dorset Council's School Admissions Arrangements and Coordinated Scheme for school place allocations for September 2027, be approved and adopted:
 - (i) Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme Timetable 2027-2028
 - (ii) Primary Co-ordinated Scheme 2027-2028
 - (iii) Secondary Co-ordinated Scheme 2027-2028
 - (iv) In Year Co-ordinated Scheme 2027-2028
 - (v) Admissions Arrangements for Community & Voluntary Controlled Schools 2027-2028.
 - (vi) Admissions to Maintained Nursery Units Policy 2027-2028
 - (vii) Sixth Form Admissions Policy 2027-2028
 - (viii) Armed Forces Policy 2027-2028
- (b) In addition, the following reductions in Pupil Admissions Number (PAN), be approved.
 - (i) William Barnes Primary School reduction of their PAN from 30 to 20 with effect from September 2027.
 - (ii) Wyke Regis Junior School reduction of their PAN from 90 to 60 with effect from September 2027.

Reason for the decision

To determine admissions arrangements in accordance with statutory requirements including the Schools Admissions Code September 2021.

To ensure compliance with the latest legislation and any subsequent regulation/statutory guidance.

12 INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT

That the contents of the annual report be received and noted.

Reason for the recommendation

To ensure that the QARO service continued to develop and evolve to offer the best possible support and challenge to the Local Authority in meeting the needs of our children in care, and to ensure voices of children and young people in care were heard and acted upon.

13 LADO (LOCAL AUTHORITY SAFEGUARDING OFFICER) ANNUAL REPORT

That the annual report be received.

Reason for the decision

To provide a clear and comprehensive overview of the LADO service and ensure all stakeholders were fully informed via the LADO Annual Report.

14 COOMBE HOUSE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2025

That the Coombe House annual report be received and noted.

Reason for the decision

To ensure that Cabinet was fully informed of the activities and work of Coombe House.

15 PRINTING OF ELECTORAL REGISTRATION AND ELECTION MATERIALS - PROCUREMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Cabinet agreed

(a) To a contract modification, in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015, Regulation 72, to the existing electoral registration and elections printing contract extending the term for a period of 6 months to 31 August 2026. The value of the permitted modification under Regulation 72 is no more than 10% of the initial contract value of £805,000 i.e. £80,500.

(b) To the commencement of a procurement exercise for a contract for electoral registration and election printing.

Reason for decision

The Council must maintain its ability to meet statutory obligations for delivering elections and electoral registration services, and the current supplier had provisionally agreed to

extend the existing contract pending internal approvals. As the estimated value of the new electoral registration and elections printing contract is £1.85 million, exceeding the £500,000 financial threshold for key decisions, Cabinet approval was required to proceed with the procurement.

16 EAST DEVON LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION

That the response to East Devon District Council, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report of 29 January 2026, be agreed.

Reason for decision

To ensure that this Council's views were taken into account in preparing the East Devon Local Plan and maintain appropriate cooperation during the production of both councils' local plans.

17 NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION RESPONSE

That the response agreed with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Emergency Planning, be endorsed.

Reason for the decision

Dorset Council must engage constructively with the New Forest National Park Authority in preparing its Local Plan, including responding to cross-boundary matters such as housing need and provision for gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople. A draft consultation response, agreed with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Emergency Planning and included at Appendix B of the report of 29 January 2026, had been submitted to the Authority. Following Cabinet's consideration, Dorset Council would confirm that this response was final or amend and resubmit it to replace the original draft.

18 WEYMOUTH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- (a) That the Council 'makes' the Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan (as set out in Appendix A of the report of 29 January 2026) part of the statutory development plan for the Weymouth Neighbourhood Area, replacing the made Sutton Poyntz Neighbourhood Plan.
- (b) That the Council offers its congratulations to Weymouth Town Council and members of the Neighbourhood Plan Group for producing a successful neighbourhood plan.

Reason for the decision

To formally 'make' the Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan part of the statutory development plan for the Weymouth Neighbourhood Area, replacing the made Sutton Poyntz Neighbourhood Plan. In addition, to recognise the significant amount of work undertaken by the Town Council and members of the Neighbourhood Plan Group in preparing the plan and to congratulate the Council and the Group on their success.

19 MELBURY ABBAS AND CANN NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- (a) That the Council 'makes' the Melbury Abbas and Cann Neighbourhood Development Plan (as set out in Appendix A of the report to cabinet 29 January 2026) part of the statutory development plan for the Melbury Abbas and Cann Neighbourhood Area.
- (b) That the Council offers its congratulations to Melbury Abbas and Cann Parish Council and members of the Neighbourhood Plan Group for producing a successful neighbourhood plan.

Reason for the decision

To formally 'make' the Melbury Abbas and Cann Neighbourhood Development Plan part of the statutory development plan for the Melbury Abbas and Cann Neighbourhood Area. In addition, to recognise the significant amount of work undertaken by the Parish Council and members of the Neighbourhood Plan Group in preparing the plan and to congratulate the Council and the Group on their success.