

Date of committee: 3 March 2026

Date published: 4 March 2026

Date of implementation: 12 March 2026

DECISIONS OF THE CABINET 3 MARCH 2026

The following decisions were made by the Cabinet on 3 March 2026 and will come into force and may be implemented on 12 March 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 **11 March 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 BIODIVERSITY DUTY REPORT 2023-24

That the Dorset Council's Biodiversity Duty Report 2023–25 be endorsed and its publication and subsequent submission to Defra, be approved.

Reason for the decision

To ensure that Dorset Council met its statutory requirement to prepare, approve and publish a Biodiversity Duty Report for the 2023–25 period and for it to be submitted to Defra by the required deadline.

7 AUTHORITY TO GRANT FARM BUSINESS TENANCIES ON COUNTY FARMS

That authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Place to grant Farm Business Tenancies (FBTs) with an aggregate rental value exceeding £500,000, including those for the four farms currently being relet as well as any future re-lettings, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Property & Assets and Economic Growth and the S151 Officer, on terms to be agreed.

Reason for the decision

To enable a responsive and efficient approach to granting Progression Farm FBTs, where contractual terms were typically 20–25 years and market rents meant the aggregate rental value routinely exceeds £500,000.

This delegation ensured alignment with the Farms Estate Strategy.

8 ENTERING INTO SOUTH WEST FLOOD AND COASTAL SHARED SERVICE

- (a) That entering into a Shared Service Agreement for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management with South West Flood and Coastal (BCP Council & East Devon District Council) be supported.
- (b) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director for Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Place Services to negotiate, authorise and enter into the Shared Service Agreement, following Dorset Council's governance processes for entering into agreements.

Reason for the decision

Joining the partnership would deliver climate resilience, increased external funding, stronger local networks, improved service capacity, and reduced reliance on consultancy support, whilst enabling closer collaboration with local councils and the Environment Agency.

9 SWANAGE BEACH COASTAL PROTECTION SCHEME

- (a) That the Swanage Beach Coastal Protection Scheme outline business case be approved.
- (b) That the budget allocation within the Capital programme and as detailed in Table 1.0 section 7 of the report, be approved.
- (c) That the Outline Business Case be submitted to the Environment Agency's National Project Assurance Service.
- (d) That the draw-down of all external Flood Defence Grant-In-Aid and Local Levy funding be authorised, on an ongoing basis throughout the duration of the project.
- (e) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director for Place in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Cabinet Member for Place Services, to procure and award the works and associated professional services.

Reason for the decision

- Scheme delivery was required to provide resilience against coastal erosion and flooding.
- National flood funding rules change on 1 April 2026, the outline business case must be submitted before 31 March 2026 to avoid the risk of extensive rework, delays, and additional costs under the new requirements.
- The outline business case setting out the £4.987m project required cabinet approval before it could be considered for external funding.

10 BRIDPORT (WEST BAY) HARBOUR WALLS STABILISATION & PROPERTY WORKS

- (a) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director for Place to agree a specification for required works, procurement and award of contracts for harbour wall repairs up to a maximum spend (as shown in Appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet of 3 March 2026), following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Place Services and the Section 151 Officer.
- (b) That a series of options for the council owned buildings affected by the localised ground movement be investigated.

Reason for the decision

Delegating authority for the overall harbour wall repair works would ensure that essential stabilisation and repair activity could proceed in a coordinated and efficient manner, maintaining the safety, functionality and resilience of key harbour infrastructure. Consultation with the Cabinet Member for Place Services and the Section 151 Officer would provide appropriate oversight and financial assurance.

The full options for the related buildings could not be suitably assessed until the works to the walls had been completed. The options for the buildings would need to be investigated, with a subsequent report presented to Cabinet if further substantial works were required.

12 DORSET COUNCIL TENANCY STRATEGY 2026 - 2031

- (a) That the Dorset Council Tenancy Strategy 2026 – 2031 be approved.
- (b) That the relevant part of section 5.3 of the Tenancy Strategy be amended as follows:

“We welcome an approach where any breaches of tenancy (for example rent arrears, anti-social behaviour and damaging property) are dealt with under the normal possession process, allowing a court to consider the case. We expect registered providers to avoid including tenant rent arrears in decisions on tenancy renewals. We expect registered providers to prioritise other methods to resolve rent arrears.

We also expect registered providers to avoid including complaints due to antisocial behaviour in decisions on tenancy renewals. In exceptional circumstances, if registered providers do consider non-renewal of tenancy because of antisocial behaviour, we expect that community care needs (e.g. social care needs, domiciliary care needs, health care needs, etc.) are included in any assessment.”

Reason for the decision

This strategy fulfilled the council’s legal obligations under The Localism Act 2011 by explaining its expectations and outlining the approach the council would like Registered Providers to take when creating their own tenancy policies.

13 CRISIS AND RESILIENCE FUND

- (a) That the day one continuation of critical crisis and resilience projects in line with the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF) criteria project proposals, be approved.
- (b) It was noted that local authorities must allocate CRF funding to provide financial support towards housing needs, to those who face a shortfall in meeting their housing costs. This would replace the current Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) scheme ending on the 31 March 2026.
- (c) It was noted that once more information relating to the administration of the new fund was available from Government, a further report would be submitted to People and Health Overview Committee for consideration.

Reason for the decision

To ensure Dorset Council was safe, legal and compliant with the CRF criteria and that there was no loss of critical crisis and resilience support whilst further development work was undertaken within Dorset Council and with our strategic community delivery partners.

CRF Guidance stated that authorities were expected to maintain existing levels of spending on Housing Payments, using the FYE March 2026 allocations for DHPs as a guide. The Housing Payment would closely replicate existing DHP guidelines and would adopt a phased transition over the 3-year funding period.

14 WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES

- (a) That the Community Conversations approach outlined in the report to Cabinet of 3 March 2026, which supported how we work with communities to deliver the Council Plan objectives, be approved and prepared for the English Devolution and Community Empowerment legislation.
- (b) That the revised Statement of Reasonable Expectations between Dorset Council and parish and town councils be signed by the Leader of Dorset Council and adopted.

Reason for the decision

To enable Dorset Council to strengthen partnership working with town and parish councils, and key community partners including the voluntary and community sector, as we understand how to best meet community needs and improve outcomes for residents in a sustainable and effective way. This would help us deliver the objectives under 'Communities for All' in our council plan, and prepare for policy changes that were emerging from the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill.

15 TOWARDS A NEW MODEL OF DAY OPPORTUNITIES

- (a) That the review of our commissioning model with Care Dorset and the private sector, be endorsed.
- (b) That the introduction of the revised delivery model, as described within the report of 3 March 2026 at appendix 1, supporting development of a range of activities across multiple locations for implementation, be approved.

Reason for the decision

The decision established a modern, sustainable model of day opportunities that better reflected the evolving needs and aspirations of Dorset residents by promoting flexible, community-based support that built independence, wellbeing, and social inclusion, while maintaining specialist provision for people with complex needs. This approach enabled the Council to make more effective use of community assets, integrate services within local neighbourhoods, and align with wider priorities such as prevention, early help, and outcomes-focused delivery. It also ensured resources were used efficiently by optimising commissioning with Care Dorset and the independent sector, supported delivery of the Commissioning for a Better Life Strategy 2023–2028, expanded personalised opportunities beyond traditional building-based services, and ultimately created a more responsive, inclusive, and financially sustainable model that strengthened pathways to independence and reduced future care needs.

16 PROCUREMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR SPECIFIED SERVICES FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

- (a) That Cabinet approves the budget and funding allocations to procurements within Appendix 1 and delegates authority to the Executive Director of People – Children's, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education & Skills and

the Corporate Director Finance & Commercial / Chief Financial Officer & S151 officer to procure and award contracts, or release agreed funding to third parties delivering services, for any procurement within Cabinet approved Appendix 1 provided the cost is contained within the Children's Services budget..

- (b) That the re-opening of the existing, previously approved procurement framework to support ongoing commissioning activity within Children's Services, without the requirement of further Cabinet approval of openings, be approved.
- (c) That Cabinet notes that these frameworks had already been formally established in line with procurement regulations and governance procedures.

Independent non maintained special school and specialist post 16 placements.

- (d) That Cabinet notes that the arrangements for securing placements at independent non maintained special schools and specialist post 16 providers which was operated in accordance with the Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Scheme of Delegation (as set out in paragraph 3.6 of the Cabinet report of 3 March 2026).

Reason for the decision

To draw together several previous delegations against individual Children's Services budgets to ensure consistency of approach and to ensure appropriate oversight and authority was in place to allow sufficient services to be procured to meet the needs of children and young people.

17 BUSINESS GROWTH DORSET – GOVERNMENT GROWTH HUB FUNDING FINANCIAL YEAR 26/27 TO 28/29

- (a) That the acceptance of the Growth Hub grant for 2026/27 - 2028/29 and its associated grant conditions, be approved.
- (b) That the in principle proposed budget, resourcing and activities, be approved.
- (c) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director, Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Property, Assets and Economic Growth, to implement and adjust delivery plans within grant rules.

Reason for the decision

Accepting the funding advances the Council's "Grow our Economy" strategic priority and supports delivery of the Economic Growth Strategy 2025–2040, supporting entrepreneurship and local business. It contributed towards actions in the Council Plan aiming to narrow the Dorset to UK productivity gap by 5% by 2029 and create 1000 business start-up courses for 16-34 year olds.

18 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE CONSULTATION RESPONSE

That the proposed responses to the NPPF and PPG consultations for submission be agreed.

Reason for the decision

Responding to the consultations meant that Dorset Council had an influence on the formation of the new NPPF and associated PPG. As one of the largest local planning authorities in England, it was important that a response was made.

19 ADOPTION OF LOCAL HERITAGE LIST

- (a) That the list of local heritage assets be approved and be published on the Dorset Council's Website.
- (b) That authority be delegated to the Director of Planning, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning, to approve any future modifications to the list.

Reason for the decision

To approve and publish a list of local heritage assets which can be used to inform future planning decisions.