

Date of committee: 21 April 2026

Date published: 22 April 2026

Date of implementation: 30 April 2026

DECISIONS OF THE CABINET 21 APRIL 2026

The following decisions were made by the Cabinet on 21 April 2026 and will come into force and may be implemented on xxx 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 **29 April 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 STRATEGIC COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) - PRIORITISATION OF CIL FUNDED INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

That Cabinet:

- (a) Agree to allocate strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) based on the projects and values shown in appendix A of the report of 21 April 2026 noting each allocated project was subject to inclusion in the Capital Programme and the development of an appropriate business case, and
- (b) Commit up to £600,000 of future CIL income in the West Dorset charging area per year to the Lyme Regis Cobb project, for a period of two years (to 2028), and
- (c) Delegate authority to the Executive Director for Regeneration, Infrastructure and Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Emergency Planning, to agree a contribution of strategic CIL for the West Parley Link Road project, to be secured from the balance of uncommitted strategic CIL in the East Dorset charging schedule.

The contribution was subject to evidence being submitted to the council of the cost of the project and development viability. It was further recommended that future CIL income from the East Dorset charging schedule be considered should it be required.

Reason for the decision

To ensure the delivery of important infrastructure to support growth and development.

7 CULTURE STRATEGY 2026 - 2031

That the Dorset Cultural Strategy 2026 – 2031 be adopted.

Reason for the decision

The Cultural Strategy would help to increase the opportunities of securing new investment into Dorset and maximise the leverage value of the council's own investment in arts, heritage and culture. This Cultural Strategy would be the foundation on which Dorset Council would set its own funding criteria, ensuring that all grant recipients were contributing to its priorities and ambition.

8 NITROGEN CREDIT PRICING METHODOLOGY

That the methodology for setting the price for Poole Harbour nitrogen permanent credits (as set out in appendix 1) be agreed and allow for a discretionary adjustment of up to 10% to be applied, with authority delegated to the Executive Director of Place to respond appropriately to market conditions.

Reason for the decision

The selling of nutrient credits to developers was essential because it provided a mechanism for development to proceed legally, ensuring that nutrient impacts were mitigated. It also ensured legal defensibility, financial sustainability, a credible and trusted credit market, and strong governance through transparent, accountable pricing.

9 HOUSING STANDARDS AND TENANTS RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT POLICY

That:

- (a) the Housing Standards and Tenants Rights Enforcement Policy 2026 be approved and adopted.
- (b) delegated authority be given to the Cabinet Member for Health and Housing, in consultation with the Interim/Corporate Director for Housing and Community Safety, to make minor changes to the Housing Standards and Tenants Rights Enforcement Policy 2026 including
 - i. the need to amend the policy to account for known future enactments which form part of the Phase 1 and Phase 2 implementation of the Renters Rights Act 2025; and,
 - ii. approval of operational procedure notes including but not limited to a methodology for determining the amount of Civil Financial Penalties under this policy for breaches of up to £7,000 and offences of up to £40,000.
- (c) updates on the financial arrangements be made available on a monthly basis to the Chair and Vice-Chair of the People and Health Overview Committee.
- (d) an update on the policy be provided to an Overview Committee at an appropriate time within the first year of its operation.

Reason for the decision

To ensure that the Council had a robust and legally compliant enforcement policy which enabled the effective enforcement of the Housing Act 2004, Renters Rights Act 2025, the 'Landlord Legislation' and other relevant statutory provisions affecting enforcement in the Private Rented Sector, which would be maintained 'up to date' as new known legal provisions were enacted.

10 LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND (LAHF) 4

- (a) That £662,000 capital and £4,796 revenue to be granted to Bournemouth Churches Housing (BCHA), who will act as the delivery vehicle and purchase the 4 properties using these funds and their own funds.

Completion of the purchase of the properties to be finalised by 31st March 2027;

- (b) That a lettings plan be in place with BCHA so Dorset Council can ensure the properties were allocated in accordance with the funding requirements.

Reason for the decision

The Council previously purchased and now owns 30 properties using funding provided through LAHF1 by Government and Dorset Council. While these homes will be used as temporary accommodation when vacant, the project required significant input from the Housing and Assets teams. In addition, as the Council was not a stock-holding authority, it could only offer non-secure tenancies.

LAHF4 funding required Afghan refugees to be offered secure tenancies. It was therefore recommended that the properties are provided, owned, and managed by a Registered Provider, specifically BCHA, to ensure secure tenancies could be offered to Afghan families.

11 TRANSFORMATION UPDATE

- (a) That the progress to date in delivery of the 2025/26 plans including realised benefit outcomes, be noted.
- (b) That the 2026/27 delivery plan, including benefits, key milestones, and intended outcomes for the year be approved.
- (c) That the adjusted business change model for the HR, Procurement & Finance programme including the approach to resourcing, engagement, training, readiness, and adoption across all services, be agreed.
- (d) That Cabinet recommend to Full Council the use of up to £5.3m of flexible use of capital receipts and approve the remaining balance of £1.97m of the investment request of £7.27m be funded from reserves, for the transformation portfolio, enabling continued delivery of priority workstreams and associated benefits, including ERP – HR, Finance and Procurement system investment. To recommend approval of the updated use of flexible use of capital receipts strategy policy, summary of as set out in Appendix B of the report of 21 April 2026.
- (e) That the spend decision of £2.34m for digital initiatives pending final business case sign off across the next 6 months be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Section 151 officer.
- (f) That the updated governance and reporting cadence outlined in the report, including frequency, format, and escalation routes for programme oversight and decision making, be agreed.

Reason for the decision

The decision gave the council the direction, resources and oversight needed to deliver the 2026/27 transformation plan. They also make sure the ERP - HR, procurement and finance programme had the right support for business change. This allowed the next stage of investment to go ahead, keeps track of progress and risks, and ensure the planned benefits were achieved.

12 MICROSOFT LICENSING MAY 2026 TO APRIL 2027 - SPEND OVER £500K

That a maximum spend of £2.332m be authorised on the final year of our current, extended Microsoft Enterprise Subscription Agreement and associated licensing spends through our compliantly contracted LSP, Boxxe.

Reason for the decision

To continue to be able to access critical operational licensing, after the 1 May 2026 renewal date, authority was required to spend on the additional year of the current Microsoft Enterprise Agreement, ahead of a formal re-procurement for 1 May 2027.

13 NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION

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

Reason for the decision

It was important that Dorset Council engaged with New Forest District Council in the production of their Local Plan and sought to address any cross-boundary issues constructively. The response to the consultation on the emerging Local Plan was part of that on-going cooperation.

The draft response in Appendix A to the report of 21 April 2026 had been submitted to the New Forest District Council. This draft response had been agreed with the Cabinet member for Planning and Emergency Planning.

After consideration by Cabinet, contact would be made with the District Council to either confirm that the submitted response was final or to adjust the response and submit a revised version to supersede the original draft response.

14 MARNHULL NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2024 - 2038

- (a) That the Council 'makes' the Marnhull Neighbourhood Development Plan, 2024 - 2038 (as set out in Appendix A of the report of 21 April 2026) part of the statutory development plan for the Marnhull Neighbourhood Area.
- (b) That the Council offers its congratulations to Marnhull Parish Council and members of the Neighbourhood Plan Group for producing a successful neighbourhood plan.

Reason for the decision

To formally 'make' the Marnhull Neighbourhood Development Plan, 2024 -2038 part of the statutory development plan for the Marnhull 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.